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OUR SCOTTISH CLERGY.

OUR SCOTTISH CLERGY:

FIFTY-SIX SKETCHES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, THEOLOGICAL, & CRITICAL,

INCLUDING

CLERGYMEN OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

EDITED
BY JOHN SMITH, A.M.,
AUTHOR OF "SACRED BIOGRAPHY," &c. &c.

SECOND SERIES.

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OUR SCOTTISH CLERGY.

Spain had never existed. The writers of the following Sketches are under no apprehensions that the dark ages will be rolled back—that the Bible will again be shut up in the Vatican—the ministers of the gospel in monasteries, and its professors in inquisitorial dungeons. It is not, however, to be concealed, that very grave attempts are being made to restore the past. Even in England, under the auspices of a professedly Protestant ecclesiastical hierarchy, sanctioned by a Protestant parliament, monasteries are reviving, and auricular confession and other observances of darker ages are being restored. These are the manifestations of a spirit not altogether unknown even in our own country. Here and there a clergyman may be found who would wrap himself in mystery, and conceal himself and his work from public inspection. This spirit, in a darker period, qualified its possessors for being sanctimonious confessors and cruel inquisitors. These consider their persons and work so sacred, as to be contaminated by public gaze. They reckon the former times better than these, because their studies and their churches were never molested by the public eye, and consequently they could preach and pray only to please themselves, without the annoyance of ruthless intruders. These were the gala days of intolerance and bigotry. One sect could heartily denounce every other sect, without any fears of publicity beyond its own sacred precincts. The commandments of men were enforced with greater earnestness than the precepts of God. As the light shines, sectarian views are gradually banished from the pulpit. The cases, indeed, are few, in which the sect can be determined from the service. One of the designs of the following Sketches is to destroy utterly sectarian doctrines, and to subvert party names. Clergymen are exhibited as the ministers of the gospel

rather than the adherents of a sect—as the property of the public more than denominational advocates. The good they accomplish is not the result of their ecclesiastical relationships, but of the scripturality of their views, and self-devotedness of their lives. No minister feels ashamed when the doctrines of the cross, which he preaches, are exhibited to the world; while the publication of a tirade, meant only for congregational edification, might cause some annoyance.

But a similar effect may be produced on the people as on the preacher. The reader of the following Sketches may readily learn from them that sects differ, not in doctrines but in ecclesiastics. Instead of looking on other sects as beyond the pale of the Church, he will learn that Israel now, as well as of old, has her various tribes, and that diversity of ecclesiastical belief is quite compatible with uniformity of religious views. If such absurd notions still lurk in any breast, as that the gospel is not preached in the Established Church, or that Dissenting clergymen are afraid to enforce the precepts of the gospel on their hearers, a perusal of these Sketches may tend to eradicate them.

To some who ponder this and a preceding volume, the question may present itself, Why are sects so numerous, while the doctrines they hold and teach are the same? It is one of the objects the writers had in view, that this question might be calmly considered. Christians of different sects, when they reveal their minds to each other, are often astonished to find such similarity of sentiments and views, and when churches begin to understand each other union must be the result.

It is unnecessary to add that the chief aim of these Sketches is to “magnify the office” of the Christian ministry. Infidelity has too long been allowed to triumph over the divisions

in the Church of God, but by this volume their triumph will appear to be unwarranted. Believers now, as of old, are of one heart and one soul, and the Church and the world will be happy when this truth is vividly and universally realised.

The writers have the satisfaction of knowing that their efforts have not been unproductive of good. False estimates clergymen formed of themselves have been corrected, and while merit has been acknowledged, and ignorance and presumption rebuked, the man of shrinking modesty and real talent has been encouraged. It would be too much to suppose that such a series will be well received by all. A great preacher was wont to say that it was a poor sermon that did not give offence to some of the hearers, and it would be a very tame volume on such a subject that would offend none. If every preacher estimated aright his own powers, and every congregation honoured its pastor according to his ministerial worth, all might be pleased. But in the present state of even religious society it were too much to expect such accuracy, and hence differences must arise. The favour, however, with which the series has been received greatly exceeds the most sanguine expectations, and if the volumes prove as useful as the series has been popular, the wishes of the writers will be fulfilled.

The most casual reader must observe great diversity of style and thought in the volume, which is accounted for by the fact that it is the production of no fewer than eight authors. But while each has his own style, it is hoped the religious sentiments and estimate of pulpit propriety will be found to agree.

To show more fully the magnitude of the work of the Christian ministry, we subjoin a few extracts from an Address

to the Clergy of England, by the celebrated Thomas Brooks. It appears in the preface of a work now out of print, and will be new to most of the readers of this volume.

“If this Treatise (on Holiness) should fall into any of their hands who call and account themselves the only ministers of Jesus Christ; I mean such, who preach rather to please than to profit; to tickle the ear, than to awaken the conscience; that are better at fleecing of their flocks, than they are at feeding of their flocks; that seek more mens goods, than their good; that set up mens traditions above Gods own institutions; that prefer human commands, before divine commands; that are very zealous and warm for mint, anise, and cummin, but are very cold, careless and negligent, in the great and weighty matters of the law, viz., judgment, mercy, and faith. That can bless God in the church, and blaspheme him in the tavern; that prefer music in the church before singing of hallelujahs in heaven; that prefer a fat benefice before an interest in an heavenly inheritance; that can kneel devoutly behind a pillar, and in their drunken fits rail as stoutly against a post; that pretend a great deal of reverence to the name of Jesus, and yet in their lives do daily crucify the Lord Jesus; that with Judas, can kiss Christ, and betray Christ in a breath; that pretend much kindness to the head, and yet shew nothing but unkindness to the body; that preach as if they had no mind to go to heaven, and live as if they were resolved to go to hell. O that these men would seriously consider how unlike to the ministers of Jesus Christ they are; do but look into a scripture glass, and you may easily see that hell is not more unlike to heaven, nor sin more unlike to grace, nor Satan more unlike to God, than you are unlike to the holy, conscientious, faithful, &c., ministers of Jesus Christ. Gay things in a sermon are

only for men to gaze upon and admire. What are high strains and flashes of wit, new minted words and phrases, but like gay weeds and blew-bottles to the good corn? Doctrine is but the drawing of the bow, application is the hitting of the mark. How many are wise in generals, but vain in their practical inferences! A general doctrine not applied, is as a sword without an edge, not in itself, but to others; or as a whole loaf set before children, that will do them no good. A garment fitted for all bodies, is fit for no body: and so that which is spoken to all, is taken as spoken to none. Aaron's bells were golden bells, sounding pleasantly, and not as sounding brass or tinkling cymbals, as many of the carnal clergy of this nation are this day. Many there be that account themselves the only ministers of Jesus Christ, that are but like empty orators, that have a flood of words, and but a drop of matter; of whom we may truly say, They speak much, and yet say nothing, because they say nothing to the purpose. When the Lacedæmonian in Plutarch heard how sweetly the nightingale sang: O, said he, that I had this bird, surely it is a rare dish; but when he had taken it, and eat it, and found nothing but a little picking meat, he concluded with that proverbial saying, *Vox es et præterea nihil*: Now I see that thou art a mere voice and nothing else. How applicable this is to many preachers in these days, who have good lungs, but bad brains, and worse hearts and lives, the prudent reader may easily see. John the Baptist was a burning and shining light, as well as a voice: his sermons were stuffed with divine and weighty matter, &c., and not filled up with big words, or strains of wit. Many there be that have John's voice in the ministry, that have not that heat and life that John had in his ministry. That great orator (Demosthenes) himself could say, that the

riches of Greece did not consist in words. The oracle would have King Philip of Macedon to use silver lances in winning an impregnable fort, &c. Sick men, however, are not bettered by physicians' sugared words, but by their skilful hands. The sword of the spirit never wounds deeply till it be plucked out of the gaudy scabbards of human eloquence. Mr Greenham, speaking of non-residents, wisheth that his motto might be written on their study doors without, and walls within, on all the books they look on, on all the beds they lie on, and on all the tables they sit at, &c., The price of blood, the price of blood, the price of blood.

“Do not you know that Pharoah had that tender regard of his cattle, as that he thought none fit to be their ruler, their overseer, but such as were known men of activity? Pharoah would have none to be his cowherds, but men of activity, men of skill, men that were prudent and diligent, ingenious and industrious. Shall Pharoah be so careful for his cows, and shall not others be as careful for souls? What man is there under heaven that hath the use of his reason, his wits, &c., that when he is to travel, would take a fool, an ignoramus for his guide; and that when he is sick, would send for a moun-tebank to be his physician; or that when he is to ride a dangerous way, would make choice of a coward to defend him; or that when he hath a law-suit, would make use of a dunce to plead it; or that when he hath a suit of clothes to make, would send for a bungling tailor to make it? Surely none. And why then should not men be as wise for their souls?”

The writers are not a little satisfied with the very favourable manner in which the press reviewed the First Volume, which included Sketches of the Rev. Drs Buchanan, Barr, King, (late) Brown, Muir, Wardlaw, Craik, Symington, (late) Bennie,

Smyth, Eadie, McLeod, Lindsay, Candlish, (late) Chalmers, Willis, Beattie, Runciman, Forbes, Roxburgh, Jamieson, Brown, Struthers, Leishman, Napier, Henderson, Russell, Guthrie, Miller, Kidston; Robson; Rev. Messrs Anderson, Macgill, Miles, Taylor, Wood, Raleigh, Wallace, Gillan, Laurie, Duncan, J. Paterson, Arthur, Macnaughtan, Jeffrey, A. S. Patterson, Macbeth, Ramage, Wood, Lorimer, D'Orsey, Watson. Without an exception of any note every review has been not only favourable, but highly laudatory. Trusting that the same favour will be extended to the present Volume, the writers, while conscious of its many imperfections, commit it to a generous and just public. If the Series shall serve the purposes which critics have stated, and which the writers had in view, their efforts will not have been in vain.

JULY 16, 1849.

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The Free Church Clergymen sketched were all either Ministers or Students connected with the Establishment previous to the Disruption.

OUR SCOTTISH CLERGY.

REV. WILLIAM BLACK, D.D.,

BARONY CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE history of Christianity proves that the interests of pure and undefiled religion can be but slightly damaged by external influences. Often when these have conspired against it, its triumphs have been most signal. Fires cannot quench and floods cannot drown the heavenly flame which it kindles in the human soul. Its enemies discovered, earlier than its friends, that persecution only fanned its sacred fire, and that the only hope of extinguishing it was to let it alone. But though religion has proved its superiority to the machinations of its foes, it has suffered incalculably from its professed friends. While the intolerance of its enemies was powerless, the intolerance of its friends took fearful effect, and while the anathemas of the persecutor hurt no one but himself, sectarian bigotry wrought disastrously among the ranks of the friends of Christ. This last mentioned evil—religious bigotry—was the first evil, peculiar to professed discipleship, which made its appearance among the immediate followers of Christ (see Mark ix. 38), and to all appearance it will remain the last root of bitterness

in the church of the living God. The "forbid him, because he followeth not us," of the disciples, though severely rebuked by our Lord, has been most industriously repeated among his followers during the last eighteen hundred years, and will, in all probability, be the watchword of parties "till party names are known no more." Were it not for the gravity of the subject, the manifestations of bigotry must have appeared often ludicrous as well as absurd. Under its influence men of vigorous minds and unquestionable integrity have acted a part of which common sense is ashamed. They have unscrupulously shut the kingdom of heaven against their fellow Christians who happen to differ from them on some subordinate question of faith or practice. Good Augustine considered a certain punctuation of a verse near the beginning of John's Gospel the sin against the Holy Ghost, and of course handed over the punctuators to everlasting destruction, and since his time a large portion of the Christian world has considered it a part of its duty to unchristianise and anathematise the other, and in not a few instances the anathematised were the anathematisers in their turn. Our own country has had its share in this unseemly work. At the beginning of this century salvation among Protestants was considered as in the exclusive custody of the adherents of the national faith. Bold was the man who avowed himself a Dissenter, and denunciations from Protestant pulpits were not unfrequently heard. In Protestant Scotland and among Protestant men, the Dissenter was shunned as a doomed man. Landlords refused him as a tenant—the trader refused him as a merchant—the master refused him as a servant, because *he* abjured subjection to the established faith. The place where he worshipped was the conventicle—the minister who preached to him was a deceiver, and scorn and pity were profusely measured out to him. According to the adage, "extremes meet," the Dissenter, now that dissent is strong and in the majority, abjures in his turn the adherent of the state faith. Not many years ago it was not only privately whispered, but openly declared, through a portion of the press, that since the disruption the Gospel is not preached in the Established Church, and to this day there are found here and there those who very religiously hold that opinion.

That the Gospel may not be preached in all the twelve hundred pulpits of the Scottish Establishment, is more than probable ; but that the Gospel cannot be preached in any of them, bigotry, we should suppose, can scarcely bring itself to believe. Whatever may be thought of the policy of that church, there is certainly nothing in it to prevent the most faithful exhibition of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. But as abstract reasoning has but a sorry chance of being appreciated by those who can exclude any evangelical denomination from the pale of the visible church, we appeal to facts. These unmistakeably show that there is no section of the church so corrupt as to have no evangelical preachers, and no section so pure as to have none but evangelical preachers. A national church, no doubt, offers to its clergy temptations of a mercenary character ; but small is the ambition of those young men whom the emoluments of our Scottish Establishment would induce to rank themselves among its ministers. The talented Dissenter has a better chance, even as regards this world, than the patronised Churchman. We are happy in being enabled to refer to the clergyman whose name heads these remarks, and who is one of the most fortunate, temporally considered, of the ministers of our Scottish Establishment, as a proof that the Gospel is both faithfully and effectively preached in that communion, as the subjoined discourse delivered on the forenoon of last Sabbath amply testifies. The text selected was Acts xxvi. 22, 23, "Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day, witnessing no other things than," &c. The preacher commenced by stating that the text was the concluding portion of Paul's address before Agrippa, when on his trial before that king on being accused by the Jews. In that address he alludes to his former condition as a Pharisee and persecutor—to his divine call and commission to preach the gospel—and he sums up in the words of the text—"Having obtained help," &c. We have previously considered the conviction and conversion of the apostle, the way he fulfilled the duties of his commission, and we have now in the text the sum of his great message. The words may be considered as including the three following topics. 1st, The gospel ministry is of God; 2d, The subject of that gospel is Christ and him crucified; and 3d, The extent

of its invitations—including small and great—the whole of the human race. 1st, The gospel ministry is of God. The text is a reference to the special support Paul had, in discharging his work, which enabled him to be faithful—a support which enabled him to exhibit those great features of character peculiar to him as a successful minister of Christ. That a Divine Providence had often interfered for his deliverance and encouragement is very evident. (Here the preacher enumerated various miraculous interpositions in behalf of the apostle.) But besides the singular interpositions of Providence for his safety and deliverance, the apostle may in the text refer to the grace of which he was the partaker. He may look back to the time when he received a particular and miraculous call—when he was dedicated as a minister of the gospel, and sent to preach it to the Gentiles. But for this call at first, and but for special aid from above, the graces implanted would languish and die. The remains of indwelling sin might have triumphed over him—he might have been led away from the simplicity of the truth by the power of abounding error. But he obtained help of God to maintain his integrity to the end. Christ's strength was made perfect in weakness. No less than fourteen years after his conversion, we hear him complaining of a law of sin in his members—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death;" but he adds, "I thank God through Jesus Christ the Lord." At the close of his career he could say, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. The principles alluded to ought to come home to the heart and bosom of all. There can be none here not called to review the sparing mercies of God as regards themselves. While many have been called away we have enjoyed health—that blessing which sweetens every other mercy of life, or, if we have been occasionally laid on the bed of affliction, by the good hand of God upon us we have been restored to health, and hence we have reason to say, "Having obtained health of God, we continue," &c. But the 2d thing in the text is the grand subject of the gospel ministry—Christ Jesus. Witnessing, says Paul, none other things, &c., that Christ should come, &c. Here we have the complete identification of the gospel ministry with the arrangements of the early economy.

The apostle here, and in other places, when on his defence, showed, that in persecuting him, they slighted no new doctrine but the faith of their fathers. I stand, says he, in another place, and am judged of the hope of the Fathers to which our twelve tribes, &c., for which hope I am accused. He thus made them, in condemning him, pass a vote of condemnation on Moses, on whom they trusted. Paul here shows that the law and the gospel are not opposed. The early dispensation was a part of one vast continuous system, of which the gospel is the last. The former dispensation was the type, this the antitype—the former the shadow, this the substance—the former the dawn, this the splendour of the noonday. The excellence and substance of all the dispensations are to be found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the all in all of that system, and there is not a more beautiful summary of the gospel than that in our text; and hence the song of the redeemed in heaven is the song of Moses and of the Lamb. Let us consider the facts here stated. The victims of old typified the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The prophets had spoken of Christ as one to be cut off, but not for himself. The Psalms are full of details, and the very words he used, when suffering, are found there. Isaiah speaks of these, more as if they had been facts in history than events to take place. Daniel speaks of the time of his appearance, and specifies the very year and day, and almost the hour, of Christ's death, and Zechariah named the sum of money for which he would be sold. In the sufferings of Christ there was a full and literal accomplishment of these predictions. He made an end of sin offering, and brought in everlasting righteousness. He died for the justification of all who believe in his name. Lord we believe, help our unbelief.—But they preached Christ as the first-born from the dead. The entering of the high priest into the holies was a type of Christ's resurrection. His resurrection was foretold by prophets, and was ultimately made the great proof of his Messiahship. He was the first to rise from the dead, in point of dignity rather than of time, for some of his people rose before him. His resurrection testified the acceptance of his sacrifice, and it is a pledge of the resurrection of his people. Christ the first fruits, then they that

are Christ's at his coming. For this end Christ died and rose and revived that he might be Lord of the dead and living. As he died and rose, so also them who sleep in Jesus God will bring (their souls) with him, and they will, soul and body, be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they be for ever with the Lord. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! The third and last topic of the text is the blessings to result from his death and resurrection. He is to show light to the Gentiles. Light is descriptive of spiritual blessings. He himself said (John viii.) that he was the light of the world, the light which dispels the clouds of error and superstition. He is the day star from on high. The ministry of the Word was appointed to effect the spiritual illumination of men. By the Word and Spirit the grand process has from the beginning been carried on in the Church of God, and will be still further carried on, till Jew and Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, shall be enlightened—till the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days. The gospel includes small and great, and just in proportion as it is preached will its great purpose go forward till the earth is full of the glory of the Lord. The preacher concluded by addressing different classes. The discourse lasted about forty minutes.

The afternoon's discourse was from 1 Peter v. 27—"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." After a brief textual introduction, the preacher proposed to advert, first, To those to whom the privilege of being cared for, on God's part, belonged—"he careth for *you*"—for those to whom the apostle had previously referred, as the called and converted of God; secondly, To the nature and extent of the privilege, *he careth*—he careth for *you* in ALL your CARES. His care is more tender than that of a mother for her infant child. "She may forget, but will not I; for I have graven you on the palms of my hands," &c.; thirdly, The duty of Christians to avail themselves of their privilege, by casting *all their cares* on God. In conclusion, he addressed those of his audience who had as yet no lot nor part in this privilege, by showing how willing God was to care for them, if they would only submit themselves to the teaching of his Word and Spirit; and that though the

doctrine of election was implied in the text and context, yet that this should operate as no barrier why they should not come and cast themselves, as sinners, before a throne of grace, for mercy to pardon, and grace to help, in time of need. Now, even *now*, to such is the accepted time, &c. The sermon lasted thirty-five minutes, and the whole service an hour and twenty minutes.

In the evening he preached at Barrowfield, on the Ascension of Christ, to a most attentive audience.

The forenoon discourse, which seems to be part of a series, is one of unquestionable excellence. The first thing that strikes the intelligent reader of it is its compactness and completeness. The introductory remarks briefly and luminously point out the connexion of the text. The divisions, instead of being merely mechanical, are the results of a careful analysis and generalisation, including all the leading ideas of the text; and the concluding remarks are inferential and practical. It deserves special notice, that both the general heads and the illustrations of the discourse are not only strictly evangelical, but eminently practical. Evangelism, now-a-days, is often a mere form of sound words; but his evangelism is also experimental. The preacher first traces all temporal blessings, and then all spiritual blessings, to "the help of God." After showing that Paul directly owed to God his preservation from temporal dangers, he strikingly illustrated his spiritual condition, and those aids which, as a Christian and an apostle, were richly vouchsafed him. On the second head of discourse—the subject of Paul's ministry—he gave a very lucid view of the connexion and harmony of the Old and New Testaments. This part of his discourse severely rebukes two classes,—those who boast of their New Testament privileges, and those who pride themselves on the novelty of their doctrines. Of late, a class of religionists are in the habit of speaking of the New Testament as if they had nothing to do with the Old. In opposition to these, the preacher taught that the foundation of the sinner's hope, and the warrant of his faith, are in the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as in those of Christ and his apostles; that the latter, indeed, are the mere exponents of the former. In opposition to the class which ascribe the virtue

of their doctrines to their novelty, the preacher showed that the apostles were anxious to impress their hearers with the fact that they taught nothing new, but merely what patriarchs and prophets had taught before them. These things, moreover, were taught strictly from the words of the text. Those who hear such a discourse, feel that the facts they are called to believe are based, not on insulated texts, but on the whole of revelation, and that they are parts of a vast system gradually evolved during a period of thousands of years, and at every stage of its progress impressively demonstrating the manifold wisdom and boundless compassion of God. There is thus in his preaching the soundest philosophy as well as experimental theology. As the views of the preacher are based on the entire of revelation, an intimate acquaintance with it is indispensable, and this, too, the discourse indicates. The quotations are numerous and apt, and in their selection more respect is paid to the sense than to the sound. Passages which the unthinking reader would never suppose to refer to the subject, beautifully illustrate it.

The manner of the preacher is in keeping with the excellence of his matter—it is grave, earnest, energetic, and dignified. His gestures, though not very animated, are correct; his style is clear, concise, and occasionally eloquent; his voice is soft and well modulated; his delivery is graceful and impressive. His notes lie before him, but he only occasionally uses them. He reads the Scriptures with much propriety and energy.

Contrary to the usual custom, he has two prayers before sermon, and these, especially the latter, refer minutely to the circumstances of his congregation, and contain more individualising than usual. In referring, for instance, on the occasion in question, to the prayers that might have been offered by his people on the morning of the Sabbath, he petitioned that the prayers of young children might be heard, that the prayers of young men might be heard, and that the prayers of old men might be heard. He also entered minutely into the circumstances of the afflicted and bereaved, specifying two families, the heads of which had been taken away by death during the preceding week.

The first singing was over eighteen minutes past eleven, the

first prayer at half-past eleven; the reading of the chapter, which was prefaced with a few excellent remarks, and the second singing and second prayer occupied twenty-five minutes, so it was within five minutes of twelve when the discourse commenced. He preached forty minutes, and after the usual concluding services the congregation was dismissed at a quarter to one o'clock. The intimations were given out after the blessing was pronounced. The singing was done chiefly by the band, and was, as a whole, respectable, though it were desirable to see the congregation joining more generally. The congregation is highly respectable, both numerically and influentially considered.

Dr Black is above the middle size, and of full habit. He is apparently about forty-five years of age, and seems to enjoy excellent health. His brow is lofty and well developed, and his countenance betrays intelligence, kindness, and benevolence. He takes a deep interest in the welfare of his people as well as in questions affecting the general welfare of the community, and few clergymen enjoy so large a share of public respect and esteem.

Dr Black was born at Auchinairn, parish of Cadder, in 1801; was educated chiefly at the parish school of Cadder and New Monkland; entered the University of Glasgow in 1812; commenced teaching a school at Dykehead, Slamannan, in May, 1816; was for several years a tutor in Glasgow and Old Monkland, and afterwards in the family of Sir R. K. D. Cuninghame, Bart., of Prestonfield. He was licensed as a preacher by the Presbytery of Hamilton, in August, 1824, and was ordained minister of Shettleston in April, 1826. He was appointed assistant and successor to the Rev. Dr Burns of Barony in July, 1828, so that he is now in the twenty-second year of his ministry, twenty of which have been spent in the Barony. In 1834 he received from the University of Glasgow the degree of D.D. He labours hard among his people, his parish being very extensive, and his congregation very large. His communicants at present number above eight hundred. When he goes out to baptize, which he has to do frequently, instead of hurrying over the ceremony he generally reads a chapter and occupies a considerable time with devotional exercises.

He labours incessantly among the poor, and often devotes the greater part of a day weekly in deliberating, along with the other members of the Parochial Board, on the best means of administering the relief. Dr Black was the first and only assistant of Dr Burns, and during the ten years he was his assistant the utmost harmony and good will prevailed between them. In the summer months his congregation averages about 1200 persons. So ardently are his people attached to him, that at the disruption he lost but three elders out of a session of sixteen, and not fifty of his congregation.

In 1755 the population of his parish was only about 5000 souls; at present it cannot be calculated at less than 130,000. In the same year the sum allowed for the weekly subsistence of the poor by the heritors, minister, and kirk session, was £1 9s 9d, or £17 7s per annum. The last assessment was estimated at £25,000 per annum.

There is a preaching station in the eastern boundary of the parish, at which the attendance varies from 100 to 150.

FEBRUARY 5, 1848.

REV. JONATHAN R. ANDERSON,

KNOX'S CHURCH, GLASGOW.

JOHN FOSTER remarks, that what in current phraseology is termed eccentricity, is often the manifestation of genius. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between natural and affected eccentricity. Many who have felt themselves unable to command popularity by ordinary efforts, have had recourse to outré experiments. Mr Jay of Bath states that London preachers have so completely exhausted the whole round of manoeuvre and of the erratic, that nothing now remains to be done to astonish, unless a preacher turn up his heels. We need not say that all attempted grotesqueness savours more of dulness than of genius, and that the clown in the pantomime is as much entitled to eclat as a real character, as the erratic mimic in the graver scenes of the sanctuary. It is difficult, and probably impossible to sustain for any lengthened period an assumed character, and hence, while affected oddity often meteor-like, astonishes the onlooker, it rapidly disappears, and leaves the world much as it found it; whereas natural singularity, comet-like, though it has a path peculiar to itself, moves on with unerring certainty, and answers important ends in the great system of the universe. The eccentric, like comets, are very imperfectly known, and are frequently very much misrepresented. The only thing known about them is their peculiarity. Their appearances, their orbits, their movements, stand more in contrast, than in analogy, to the different systems of which they form a part, and most men are quite satisfied with being able to say that they have seen them, though they should know nothing at all about them. We

have dismissed, as unworthy of attention, the mere meteor that flashes athwart the theological horizon, and whose only use is to call forth a momentary admiration before descending into the impenetrable shades of oblivion: but the comet, as it proceeds in its vast sweep, commanding at once astonishment and awe, as well as answering important and mysterious ends, is an object well calculated to command the profoundest attention. Pursuing our figure one step farther, the comet is generally as remarkable for the extent as for the eccentricity of its orbit. Its path lies among the profundities of space, "which the vulture's eye hath not seen," and but a very small part of that path comes under the cognisance of ordinary observers. If Foster's remark holds good, this characteristic of the comet has its counterpart among the eccentric of the human family. The path of genius is but very imperfectly known—it explores the distant and the profound, and taking a wider sweep, it is able more fully to explain those great relationships which obtain throughout the moral and spiritual, as well as throughout the natural universe. Among the few preachers of our day who belong to the class we have just shadowed forth, he whose name stands at the head of this sketch unquestionably deserves a place. The following outline of his discourse of last Sabbath forenoon will show that his preaching possesses the peculiarities which the above remarks indicate. Exactly at eleven he entered his pulpit, and after assuming for a little the attitude of private devotion, a few verses of a Psalm were sung, when he engaged in prayer at great length, extending to upwards of twenty minutes. He then read the first fifteen verses of the ninth chapter of the second book of Kings, interspersing his reading with cursory remarks. A few more verses having been sung, Matth. vi. 10—"Thy kingdom come"—was given out as the subject of discourse. The preacher commenced by stating that the foundation of all friendly intercourse was in friendly relationship. Can two walk together except they are agreed? No man can in prayer say, "Our Father," unless brought into a filial relationship to the hearer of prayer. "What communion hath light with darkness—what concord hath Christ with Belial?" The first desire in successful prayer ought to be that the name of the Father should be hallowed,

and in close connexion with that should be the petition, "Thy kingdom come." By kingdom here we understand the Divine dispensation of grace in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ—for in its wide and proper sense it includes all whom this dispensation provides for. It is here called God's kingdom, because He framed, set up, carried forward and consummated it, and committed the administration of it to Christ, and He laid the foundation of it in his incarnation, obedience, and death, and then ascended to heaven invested with all power in heaven and in earth, to be exercised in its administration. Christ administers that power instrumentally by his word and ordinances, and efficiently by the Holy Ghost. The seat of this kingdom lies properly in the heart, and yet it takes a visible form in external profession and suitable practice. Some have been greatly mistaken in assuming that there is nothing whereby it connects itself with this world—with the transactions of men, and of the kingdoms in it. This error arose from taking a limited and partial view of the kingdom. It is to be borne in mind that its seat is in the heart. Vain is it to expect any valuable outward manifestation without inward solid principle. As blossom, without the tree being rooted, is impossible, so is a fair profession without real principle. The text teaches the necessity of asking and expecting the coming of the kingdom. We are to pray for its coming in our own souls, remembering ever that it can so come only according to the good pleasure of God. Christ, in all he did, had a respect to his Father's will. "I came to do the will of him that sent me." The seats of honour in his kingdom were to be given to those for whom they were prepared by his Father. Before he ascended he told the disciples it was not for them to know the times and seasons the Father hath put in his own power, and at the end will he deliver up the kingdom to God even his Father, that God may be all in all. From first to last reference is had to the Father's will, and we are to look to the good pleasure of the Father for our interest in the blessings of the kingdom. I ask your experience of this matter. Do you feel the necessity of the influence of the Spirit, of the love of the Father, and of the grace of Christ, and communion of the Holy Ghost? Accordingly, then, to these principles, what do they ask who

say, "Thy kingdom come"? We must beware of asking in darkness and ignorance. Do you truly know what you ask? Those who believe the human mind is like a sheet of white paper have, according to their views, only to ask that an edifice may be built up in their souls. But, according to the Scriptures, we are corrupted, heirs of destruction, slaves of sin, the children of the devil. Those who never turn their eyes inward on the real state of their heart are ready to consider the representations of Scripture a libel on human nature; but those who look on the Bible and into their hearts at the same time find the one the exact counterpart of the other. The Bible is a map of the little world within, and a most faithful delineator it is of the territory of the human soul. It writes bitter things against us, but things that must be believed. Before one is enlightened he is ready to ask when he hears human nature described, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do such a thing?" but when his eyes are opened he believes the divine testimony, that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Is this the case with you? If believers, you have found that you are dogs enough to do all these and worse things. Now the man who says, "Thy kingdom come," must see his soul in a state of total spiritual darkness. There is probably no one here but believes that he has his faults; but few believe that they are in a state of absolute darkness, deep as the grave, and dense as hell itself, so far as hell can be recognised on earth. Ye were sometimes *darkness*, says an apostle—not in darkness, but darkness itself. Many have chattered the Lord's prayer from their infancy, and yet have the first principles of it to learn. Many religionists at this day feel no need of pulling down. They are very busy daubing the wall with untempered mortar, when they should apply the lever and overthrow it. So it is with the majority in these pews. You don't want to be condemned and cast down. I know the current is against me in this congregation. You ask what I wish. I wish you to destroy the works of the devil in your own souls. That kingdom will not come near you till you do so. Some think—I have even heard ministers say—that they could not again go through the exercise they had at conversion. Poor men! God help them. If troubles are great at the outset, they are ten-

fold greater as one proceeds. Just in proportion to the heights of joy and happiness reached, are the depths into which believers are thrown. If men will go up to the third heaven, they must go down to the third hell! There is a wealthy place to be reached, but it is through fire and water, and the hotter the fire the cooler the waters of consolation. The greater the troubles experienced, the clearer will be the future light, and the sweeter the joy. Such is the religion of the Bible. At every stage of our progress we must have recourse to the work of casting down the works of the devil. These must be dealt with as were the Canaanites by the Israelites. The Canaanite was left still in the land; but his eye was not to pity, nor his hand to spare. There is then, first, the detection of darkness. The first step of knowledge—though it may appear paradoxical—is the discovery of ignorance—the first step to building up is casting down; the first step in the scale of wisdom is an admission of folly; I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say. The light breaks in, and the conscience is troubled at the darkness. Darkness is found to be a very painful and unpleasant thing—one cannot walk nor work with ease, but comes to a stand. The soul, however, when the kingdom comes, is enlightened about all of which it was previously ignorant. It learns its ignorance not only from the book, but experimentally. God thus teaches men to set a high value on His salvation. Is this your experience? Do you feel your darkness of the law of God, and now see it to be holy, just, and good; of the person, office, and work of Christ—and do you now admire Him and trust in Him? Is it so with all the other heads of Christian doctrine and duty which we cannot stop to enumerate. When the kingdom comes in the soul, there is life as well as light. The first effect of that life is the discovery of death. The soul is made to hate what it loved, and love what it hated. It sees conscience defiled, but also how it can be purified, and begins to behold the beauty of the Lord. It was an awful fall we made when we lost the image of God; and it is a great salvation which restores it. When God left the human soul he took all happiness away with him, and no creature can restore it till he comes in his kingdom to the soul. Then there is a light and happiness, peace and joy—a

joy unspeakable and divine. One of God's people was so oppressed with a sense of his love, that he was found bleeding at the mouth and nose. Another was heard to say, "Hold, Lord, thy servant is an earthen vessel; he can hold no more." Oh! to sleep in this sea of blessedness. Alas! many sleep in a sea of imagination. The devil can imitate true religion, and thus deceive many, saying, "Peace," when there is none. [The preacher here stated that he was unable to finish his illustrations at this time.]

He concluded with the following remarks:—First, How guilty and corrupt are we by nature. God never put his creatures lower than they are guilty. So vile, so guilty are we, that there is no help, and no hope for us, but in His kingdom. 2d, We see how it is that the kingdom is to benefit us. 3d, We learn the claims the kingdom has on our acceptance. It is suited to our condition—adapted to our wants. These ideas were illustrated at some length.

The discourse commenced at twenty minutes to twelve, and ended at five minutes to one o'clock, having occupied an hour and a quarter; and, after prayer, praise, and benediction, the congregation separated at a few minutes after one o'clock. The people stood during the last singing. The prayer before sermon, though very lengthily as already stated, was confined to general topics, and the greater part of it was occupied with confession. It stated very comprehensive views of the character of man as a transgressor, and as alienated from God. With the exception of a reference to the afflicted and bereaved, and to other congregations, the prayer was exclusively limited to general principles and general facts. The reading of the chapter we did not like; it was read hurriedly, and some parts of it slurred over, while remarks were so interspersed as to make it difficult to determine, without a reference to the book, what was divine from what was human. The singing was more earnest than harmonious—almost all seemed to be joining, but not very melodiously. In regard to the discourse, the first thing that must strike those who attentively read the outline is the extreme simplicity and luminousness of arrangement. The origin of the kingdom of God, objectively and subjectively considered, was traced to the love of God;—admission to that

kingdom was shown to be through the sacrifice and intercession of Christ, and the efficient agency in the administration of that kingdom he traced to the Holy Spirit. In treating of the kingdom subjectively, or in its application to the subjects of it, he lucidly stated the disorganisation, the darkness, and the misery of the human soul, prior to the coming of the kingdom in it, and the order, and light, and happiness, consequent on its coming. The concluding remarks were inferential, practical, and pointed.

Besides the logical arrangement, the comprehensiveness and profundity of the views stated call for special notice. Beyond all the preachers we have heard, the subject of our sketch revealed the depravity and extreme wickedness of the unrenewed heart. He explored with keen scrutiny its innermost recesses, and exposed lucidly its various chambers of imagery. In order to show the greatness of the blessings of the kingdom, he portrayed, in vivid colours, the fearful condition of those who are not its subjects. Few discourses give such a comprehensive view of the magnitude of the work of redemption, both in its design and execution. Unlike the preachers of mere reformation, or of ritual regeneration, he lays the axe to the root of the tree, and demands a thorough change of heart and mind, and a life of energetic effort and practical godliness, as the only preparative for admission into the heavenly kingdom.

The great plainness of speech he uses, not only enables his hearers readily to understand his views, but renders it impossible to misunderstand them. He seems in no fear of offending "ears polite." He uses no circumlocution to avoid what some call harsh names and harsh sayings. In addition to this plainness of speech, he generally employs the direct form of address. He speaks not *before*, but *to* his people, and with a fervour and force seldom equalled. Unlike those who say peace, peace, to their people, he warns them of every possible danger, and promises them rest and security only in heaven. Probably he is one of the few preachers who proceed to extremes in alarming the fears of their auditors, and in avoiding praise even where it is due, and hence excessive jealousy of their state subjects them to restlessness, when they might

enjoy repose. Lest he should heal their wounds slightly, he is continually probing them to the bottom, so that they must occasionally feel as did Robert Hall of Leicester, in reading the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, when he exclaimed he could find no repose in it, and threw the book aside.

The manner of the preacher is as remarkable as his matter. When he enters the pulpit his features are tranquil; and when he begins to speak, his utterance is slow, drawling, and unimpressive. When he commences his discourse, he leans forward on the Bible, buried in his gown, and articulates in a low voice and in a cold manner. By and by, however, his countenance brightens, his voice swells, his utterance becomes rapid, his gestures become animated, and his whole soul is thrown into his subject. His manner occasionally becomes violent, so that he displays the fúror as well as the pathos of the orator. He throws his body into different attitudes, and strikes the Bible frequently and forcibly. His language is strong and terse, and generally accurate. Without pretending to any of the graces of the orator, he certainly possesses what Cicero calls his *vis*, or force. His audience, always attentive, is frequently awed and rapt with "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." It is a striking fact in the history of his people, that though he is frequent and searching in his appeals, almost no one takes offence; but, on the contrary, their attachment seems proportioned to his fidelity and jealousy of their state. Those who are in the habit of asserting that ministers, who depend on their people, are afraid to speak the truth, lest they should cause offence, ought to visit Knox's Church, and there they will find one of a thousand striking exceptions to their alleged rule. There they may see any Sabbath-day a crowded, respectable, and attentive audience hanging on *his* lips, who knows no honied words, but who speaks in accents not unworthy of him by whose name the place of worship is designated—the burly Knox, at whose rebukes royalty trembled.

Mr Anderson is a native of Paisley. The *Edinburgh and Clerical Almanac* say he was ordained in 1843; but if our memory serves us, he was about a dozen years minister of Kirkfield Church in this city, previous to moving to John Knox's Church in 1843. At present he teaches Hebrew to the divinity

students of the Free Church resident in Glasgow, and his knowledge of that language is said to be considerable. Like all eccentric geniuses, his habits of etiquette and business are peculiar.

He is about the middle size, of thin habit, dark complexion, and marked features. He is apparently about forty-five years of age, and was lately left a widower, with a numerous family.

His voice is good; but in the introductory services he falls into a drawling method of articulation which wholly disappears when he warms with his subject. He occasionally has notes before him, but he very seldom examines them. Such is his fluency, that he could speak any given time without notes without the slightest hesitancy.

JANUARY 16, 1848.

REV. DAVID CROOM,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SANQUHAR.

THE evening of a Presbyterian, sacramental, winter Sabbath is invested with a profound sacredness. The services of the preceding part of the day have necessarily a potent effect on the minds of the worshippers. The communicant anticipates the approach of the communion with mingled feelings. The very dawn of that day wears an aspect peculiar to itself—the reading, the singing, the preaching, and other devotional exercises, possess unusual impressiveness—so that the mind and heart become tremblingly susceptible. The youth who witness these solemnities are generally so interested and excited as to be prepared to listen with an earnestness approaching to enthusiasm to the teachings of the evening. The very external appearance and associations of such a congregation are fraught with interest. The place of worship seems chastened and solemnised by the preceding services—the light in the sanctuary within, contrasting with the darkness without, becomes an emblem of heavenly light and life, and joy and security, while young and old, rich and poor, in the thronged pews are prepared by the pressing associations and the sacred appearance of the scene, to “hear what God the Lord will speak.” Such occasions have often been marked with the most cheering and even splendid results. It would be interesting to have an enumeration of all those whose first impressions of divine things were indelibly received, whose scepticism and infidelity were for ever eradicated, whose impetuous passions were completely subdued, whose minds were savingly awakened, whose first good purposes were unalterably

formed, whose path of happiness, of usefulness, and honour, commenced, as amid the solemnities of such a scene, the preacher reasoned of temperance, righteousness, and of judgment to come. The striking effects of such assemblies can be accounted for, partly from the effect of circumstances on men of every age and character. Despite all that has been said to the contrary, man feels, every Christian feels, that an unvarying routine of duties is in great danger of degenerating into a dull monotony. There are certain milestones which, on his journey through this world, remind man forcibly of the progress he has made, and of the goal to which he hastens.

Our thoughts were thrown into the channel indicated by the above remarks from the proceedings of last Sabbath evening in Eglinton Street United Presbyterian Church. A number of the churches in Glasgow of that body, on last Sabbath, observed their quarterly sacrament, and the clergyman whose name heads the above remarks was in our city lending his aid. Having learned that he was to address the evening assembly in that place of worship, we resolved to hear him, to ascertain whether the fame of the preacher in our city, acquired by his occasional services, was, in our estimation, well sustained. From our ideas of such an occasion no common-place discourse would have come up to our expectation. The text selected for the occasion was John vii. 37-40—"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth on me," &c. The preacher said, these words were uttered by Christ at the feast of tabernacles, which was commemorative of the Jews dwelling in tents in the wilderness. It lasted seven days, and occurred about the end of September and beginning of October, and during the feast the people dwelt in tabernacles or tents. In addition to commanded observances, the Jews added a ceremony of their own. They brought water from Siloam, in commemoration of the water which issued from the rock, and which followed them in the wilderness. The fountain from which this water was taken was at Siloam, and the water was carried by a water course eighteen hundred feet to the pool of Siloam. One of the priests went, either to the fountain or pool, and brought the water, and

taking it to the altar, mixed it with water and wine, and then poured out the mixture as an oblation. This ceremony occurred on the seventh and last day of the feast, while the words were sung, "We will draw water with joy from the wells of salvation." It is very likely that this ceremony was being attended to when the words of the text were spoken, and these would, on that account, have a peculiar significance to the Jews. Just as the priest was bearing the water, to which a great ritual value was attached, Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." I am the true fountain, the fountain of living waters, and can give what will revive and fully satisfy. The passage suggests two topics. 1st, The invitation, "If any man thirst, let him come," &c. 2d, The consideration by which the invitation is enforced, "He that believeth on me," &c. At present the first of these topics will occupy attention, namely, the invitation, and in discussing it, we consider, 1st, the invitation itself, "Come and drink." 2d, We shall enquire as to whom the words are addressed, "If any one," &c.; and 3d, the manner in which the invitation was given, "Jesus stood and cried." 1st, The invitation, "Come to me and drink," implies that there was water to be bestowed. The blessings of salvation are frequently compared to water. For instance, "Ho every one, &c., come ye to the waters." These blessings are so designated to denote their satisfying nature. They are as cold water to the thirsty soul. They include pardon for our guilt, sanctification for our pollution. They offer what we need as moral and intellectual creatures—God himself as the portion of the soul. Christ speaks of himself as the fountain. "Let him come to *me* and drink." The coming to him is evidently figurative. Scripture speaks of walking, of running, and looking, as well as coming. All these indicate the movement of the mind. Here the coming is explained by the following verse: "He that believeth on me," &c., where the believing and coming are evidently synonymous terms. Believe on me—believe in what I claim to be—then all blessings shall be yours. Regarding this coming there are two things to be noticed. 1st, The coming is all that Christ requires. It is not needful to go to Siloam, only come to me—believe in me, and you shall be saved. These

things are immediately and inseparably connected. Such shall be—*are* saved. 2d, The persons addressed deserve attention. If any man thirsts. The word thirst denotes felt want, or the craving after relief which that want creates. The thirst here does not refer to a holy thirst, such as David's, when he says, "My soul thirsts for God." Nor does it refer to the thirst indicated in the beatitude, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Those addressed had no such longings. Some attempt to gain a holy disposition before they would venture to come. But such attempts will be vain. 3d, The manner of the invitation. Jesus stood and cried. He lifted up his voice instead of whispering. This crying intimates two things. First, Christ's sincerity. It shows that he is able and willing to confer the blessings he promises. Would he thus have invited all had he not water for all? Does not the universality of the offer prove the universality of the provision? The words also indicate desire. It is the same word as used by Peter, when sinking, he cried, "Save, or I perish." Jesus cried in the same sense—with the same intensity of feeling. If he so cried there was reason. One may fear for another without reason, but Christ cannot be mistaken. But, finally, the words say he stood and cried. The principal idea which it implies is, that salvation is to be obtained in all places and at all times. Jesus standing still, while the Jews were in motion, plainly implied that they required not to go farther. It was as if Christ had said, "You need not go into the temple, passing the substance to find the shadow. On this spot, at this moment, your salvation may be secured." This occurred on the last and greatest day of the feast, at which time were collected Jews not only from all parts of the Roman empire, but from all parts of the earth. The following day would witness their dispersion. Christ, probably, might not have an opportunity of addressing them again, and therefore he cried to them, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." In the same manner, my hearers, Christ calls on you. You ought not to refuse his invitation.

The above discourse possesses excellencies of a very high order. In the introduction the historical is made to throw light on the theological—the circumstantial, on the immutable

and eternal. The preacher brought out those incidents connected with the observance of the feast of tabernacles which gave power and pathos to the appeal of the text. As the people were crowding into the temple to witness the ritual and symbolical, the Saviour was represented as standing forth, and, in the consciousness that virtue without measure, dwelt in him, inviting the anxious thousands to come to him as the source of all blessing, as the fountain of living waters. The general divisions, as well as the subdivisions, were textual and natural. Many, in their anxiety to secure a short and striking text, would have taken no notice of the context; but the preacher very properly in his division had respect to the entire of the proclamation of Christ. The two general divisions were not only founded strictly on the words of the text, but they exhausted its leading ideas. The invitation, and the results of its acceptance are the burden of the striking address of our Lord. Some may take objection to subdividing a subject so minutely. In certain cases a number of subdivisions is objectionable, but in the case of the above discourse, these are indicated so naturally and unostentatiously that they prove aids to memory without confusing it. Minute divisions were more fashionable in former days than at present. Fashionable preachers now incline more to the essay form than to divisions. But the mechanical department, excellent though it be, is but the least of the excellencies of this discourse—we say the *mechanical*, for division, however neat, is often more a mechanical than a mental process. The illustrations were concise, appropriate, and thoroughly practical. They indicated close and careful thought, and a mind well accustomed to consider a subject in its various aspects and bearings. Probably the chief excellency of the subject was the lucid view it gave of the way of a sinner's acceptance. It was throughout an extension of the unlimited invitation of the text. It was a luminous exhibition of the boundless grace and compassion of Him who uttered the invitation. The discourse was not only well reasoned, but its arguments were so stated as to be "logic on fire." There were no abstract discussions of the character or extent of the atonement—no attempt to reconcile the inscrutable purposes of Him who worketh after the counsel of his

own will. The preacher very properly assumed that what was so plainly taught in the text could not be nullified nor limited by any other text, and therefore reiterated and varied the gracious invitation till every individual felt that he was so included that nothing but the basest ingratitude, or the most determined resistance, could withstand the appeal. The preacher not only reasoned well and popularly, but he spoke like one conscious of his awful charge. It is desirable that a preacher should always show by his preaching that he is "not mad"—that he speaks the words of truth and soberness—but there is a coolness and calmness which savour little of the majesty and mercy of the gospel message. He speaks with an energy and earnestness in some measure worthy of the sacred cause. We do not see why a preacher should be less animated and earnest than the platform orator, or the pleader at the bar, not to mention those whose vocation is to supply amusement for the passing hour. If any theme demands an earnest enthusiasm is it not that in which the present with all its vicissitudes, and the future with all its realities, are concerned? Without approving of the entire manner of our preacher, we would commend his ardour, his impassioned burning eloquence to his less enthusiastic brethren. His earnestness impresses the coolest of his auditors. It spreads like a contagion, till not one remains unaffected. Besides the general pathos of his delivery, his direct appeals are most powerful. Without indulging in the unguarded language of those who astonish their auditors with the awful, he reaches the feelings and consciences of the hearers with overwhelming effect. The attractions of the lovely are in his hands more effective than the representations of the terrible. He deals more with the higher principles of man's nature than with his fears. Indeed, all the feelings, affections, desires, and fears, are alternately moved by his graphic and eloquent representations. It is said that all is well that ends well—a maxim which, if true, sanctions the discourse. The peroration was admirable. Our space has not allowed us to give in his own glowing language the appeal he made to those who may have enjoyed *their* last day of the (gospel) feast. It was in the best taste, and with great power.

His preaching is severely textual. He seems to consider himself bound to elucidate the text, and to do that alone. He takes no licence to pursue bypaths—to follow collateral trains of thought suggested by his discussions. Indeed, his adherence to his text is almost too close. Those who read the above discourse must be struck with the almost painful minuteness with which he elaborates nearly every word and idea of his text. Some, indeed, would tax him with overmuch ingenuity in regard to his treatment of one or two of the words, but this is a fault so rare in these days of theological dulness that it almost becomes a merit. Besides the textuality of his preaching, there is throughout a train of close and consecutive argumentation. Though he uses no syllogism—though he entirely avoids the technicalities of a formal ratiocination, there is logic in his very appeals; and syllogisms, without the form, in his simplest divisions and statements. Like the Scriptures themselves, he often is reasoning best when there is least appearance of the formulæ of argument. The preacher most formal in his reasoning is, as a general rule, the least convincing. It is more difficult to form an unobjectionable syllogism than to reason according to nature and thought. The mechanical always enervates the natural. There is more real and effective argument in the Sermon on the Mount than in the discourses of a Horsley or a Whately.

But besides the power of thought and ratiocination, the earnestness and energy of the preacher must be included in making up the items of his popularity. This refers chiefly to the power with which he wields his voice. His gestures are sufficiently animated, but they have too much sameness to be effective. It is in his well sustained and well rounded periods, delivered with a well sustained unfaltering voice, where his great strength lies.

He is the author of an able pamphlet on the question of the Atonement, in answer to an attack made on the orthodoxy of the United Secession Church, understood to have been written by the Rev. Peter Carmichael, a Reformed Presbyterian minister, resident a few miles from Sanquhar.

We must not omit to mention that the chronology of the service was unexceptionable. His first prayer was under ten

minutes, and had a special bearing on the circumstances of an audience of a Sacramental Sabbath evening. The last prayer was also short, so that, though the discourse lasted five minutes more than an hour, the entire service was within an hour and a half. The appearance of the preacher is youthful. He is, we understand, about 38 years of age. His voice is soft, and appears husky at first, but improves as he proceeds. His pronunciation, with a few exceptions, is correct and his delivery rapid. He is of dark complexion, and his bushy hair is neatly arranged.

He was born in Perth, and received there the rudiments of instruction. He studied at the University of St Andrews; was licensed to preach the Gospel by the United Secession Presbytery of Perth, in 1837; ordained over the 1st United Associate Congregation of Sanquhar, in the Presbytery of Dumfries, in 1838; called, in 1842, to be colleague and successor to Dr Brown of Broughton place, Edinburgh, and, in 1845, called to be colleague and successor to Dr Hengh of Regent place Church, Glasgow, both of which he declined, to the great regret of these numerous and influential congregations, chiefly, it is believed, on the ground that his health, in his own apprehension, would not have stood the tear and wear of a city charge.

Sanquhar contains about 1700 inhabitants, and has no fewer than four Presbyterian churches—one Established, one Free, and two United Presbyterian, so that, according to an equal distribution, he could have little more than 400 of the population under his charge. Congregations in both Edinburgh and Glasgow numbering nearly as many as the entire population of the town where he at present officiates, have most cordially invited him to labour among them.

JANUARY 29, 1848.

REV. GEORGE ALMOND,

ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, GLASGOW.

ALTHOUGH religion consists in supreme love to God, and consequent obedience to his laws, it is essential, in a world such as this, that it assume visible, external profession. In the early ages the forms of worship were simple as the lives of the patriarchs and prophets. Altars were erected in the open field under the wide canopy of heaven, and there the devout worshipper prevented the dawn of the morning, and offered his evening orison by calling on the name of the Lord the everlasting God. How intensely interesting to follow some of these simple but devout men of antediluvian times pitching their tents in the fields of Moreh, Mamre, and Beersheba, and with all the fervour of primitive piety, pouring out their souls to Him who is, from everlasting to everlasting, God. Patriarchial simplicity, however, gave place to a more imposing economy. Religion, which had been more an individual and family matter, next appears before us in a national form. The children of the faithful Abraham had their tabernacle and temple. A house of prayer was built in Judea for Israel and for all people. A gorgeous and costly ceremonial was then instituted, and in the midst of surrounding nations the God of Israel had a temple, an altar, a sacrifice, a united and favoured people. After four thousand years had rolled on, and forty-two generations had passed away, Christ appeared in Judea among the people chosen from all the nations of the earth to preserve the knowledge and worship of the true God in this world. He proclaimed the great extension of the worship of God, and offended the prejudices of the Jews by

asserting that the time was at hand when neither the Samaritan nor Jewish temple would be required—then God, who is a spirit, would be worshipped in spirit and in truth—when religion would cease to be represented by any one nation, and would be alike the property and the privilege of every nation, under heaven which received the testimony given concerning the Son of God. As a matter of course, religion, since that time, has appeared in every possible form, from the great hierarchy of Rome to the half-dozen Separatists, who, with devout horror, thus address all Christendom, “Stand by, for we are holier than thou.” For several centuries of the Christian era circumstances forbade any gorgeous external. By and by, however, Christianity came into favour, and its emblem (the cross) flourished not only on the place of worship but before the army marching to battle. Since then Christianity has existed by sufferance—now patronised by royal favour—now among the mountains of Switzerland—now in the fertile fields of Germany—now almost without form—now crushed under the incubus of a showy and imposing ceremonial. In Glasgow it appears in almost every possible variety. Here religious monarchy and religious democracy meet. The creed of one sect is sanctioned by Rome—of another by the British Parliament—of another by Calvin—of another by Irvine. One class think they must be right because they believe as do their betters—another believe they are right because they differ from every one past and present. One congregation is part of some great ecclesiastical hierarchy—another stands alone and refuses to acknowledge any other as a part of the Church of the living God. With the exception of the parties whose creed has not yet assumed any definite shape, the forms of Protestant Christianity in Britain are the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Independent. Events are hastening the union of all bodies under these three forms, and it is possible, if not indeed probable, that these three may also become one. Mutual explanation, and mutual concession, and denominational equality, may destroy denominational shibboleths, and the followers of Christ may yet be known, as they were in primitive ages, simply as Christians. At present we take denominations as we find them, and deal with the

clergymen of each altogether irrespective of their sectarian views, and simply as ministers of the Christian dispensation. The clergyman whose name stands at the commencement of these remarks belongs to the Scottish Episcopal communion, who, though Dissenters in Scotland, agree essentially with the Episcopal Establishment of England. The denomination consists of about 115 congregations, four of which are in Glasgow, namely—St Mary's, of which the subject of our sketch has been minister above 20 years; St Andrew's; Christ Church, Mile-End; and latterly the congregation in Anderston under the pastoral care of the Rev. A. J. D. D'Orsey. The form of worship is essentially the same as that of the Church of England.

The following is the order of the services at St Mary's Episcopal Chapel, as observed on Sabbath week :—Worship commenced at eleven o'clock, and the Rev. Mr Almond read the service, which was over at a quarter past twelve, having occupied an hour and a quarter. Part of the 103d Psalm was then sung, and at 25 minutes past 12, his assistant having entered the pulpit, and repeated a short prayer, and also the Lord's prayer, gave out Luke ii. 25—31, and preached on it forty minutes. The sermon being over, after a few words of prayer and the benediction, the congregation separated at ten minutes past one. The afternoon services commenced at a quarter past two, and the service was read by Mr Almond's assistant. At eight minutes past three the service was over, and the Rev. Mr Almond ascended the pulpit, and gave out the first three verses of the 122d Psalm, as the subject of discourse. He commenced his sermon by saying that on David's exaltation to the throne he gave the worship of God his earliest attention. The ark of God was restored to its place in Jerusalem. This Psalm (the 122d) was in all probability composed when he had completed his arrangements, and when peace and prosperity prevailed in the land. He displayed an amiable zeal for the honour of God and for the good of his people. This is a test of spiritual condition, and indicates that the heart is right with God. In illustrating these verses, we remark the delight that David had in the ordinances of the house of God. "I was glad," he says, "when it was said to

me, Go ye up to the house of God." When the love of God is in the human heart, it produces a delight in the house of God. Some think the service of the house of God a task rather than a privilege, but in proportion as the light of the present dispensation excels that of the Jewish, should be our attachment to the house of God greater than that of the Jews. We have the substance, they had only the shadow, and we should therefore avoid the mere semblance of devotion. If we form a proper estimate of our privileges, we will say, "One thing have we desired, and that will we seek after, that we may dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty." But again, this delight in the house of God was greatly augmented by those around him—his fellow-worshippers. He was glad when it was said to him by them, "Go ye up to the house of God." The diffusion of true godliness expands the heart. The spiritual good of others ought to have a place, and will have a place, in our hearts, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Hitherto, in our churches, the dead professor has had the semblance of the living saints—many languish and decay, and their piety is ready to die. To such we would say, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another daily, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. Be assured that those who take offence at being warned respecting their duty are yet strangers to the grace of God. But further. The ardour of affection which dictated this expression of joy, in the view of going up to the house of God, is indicated by the second and third verses:—Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together. I may appeal to you who love his sanctuary, Do you seek His face in vain? After the fatigues of the week do you not renew your strength and find a day in God's house better than a thousand elsewhere? What is it that delights you most? Is it to inquire in the holy temple of the Lord? What soothes affliction and lightens adversity? What prevents death from having its terrors? Those who have made the Sabbath a delight enjoy peace, as they attend to the divine ordinances and find the Sabbath a pledge of the Jerusalem above—of every dwelling in the house

of the Lord. Such say, If we forget thee, O Jerusalem, let our right hand forget its cunning. But though our best efforts should fail to induce others to go along with us the promise remains sure to ourselves. Where two or more meet in his name there the God of peace is present in the midst. We shall have the fellowship of the Father and the Son and of all the faithful in heaven and earth who are knit together compactly as a city. Be ye, therefore, steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Be ye glad when it is said, Go ye to the house of God. You have the fellowship of patriarchs and prophets, and of the general assembly and church of the first born written in heaven. Such honour have all the saints, and may this honour be yours, through God's mercy. Amen.

The sermon was over at twenty minutes to three, having occupied thirty minutes. On account of our distance from the preacher some words were imperfectly heard, but the substance in most cases is given.

The reading of the liturgy of the Episcopal Church is no unimportant part of the service. The repetition every Sabbath-day of the same words in the same order, unless read with propriety, would become a heartless ceremony. A considerable part of the service is always the same, and, consequently, requires to be gone through with rhetorical as well as with Christian propriety. Of all that is intolerable and wearisome, nothing is more so than the dull monotonous reading of this service; and, on the other hand, no service is more attractive when gone through with that propriety and energy befitting its importance. We give the subject of our sketch no more than his due when we state that we know no clergyman who does the service greater justice. We have frequently listened to his quondam assistant, the celebrated Robert Montgomery, as he, in his own dashing and original manner, read the service, and to the sweeter and more winning strains of the successor of Mr Montgomery in St Jude's, as in his own sweet silvery tones, he repeated the sublime words; but at the risk of being accused as of a poor taste, we have no hesitation in saying, that we would rather hear that service read by Mr Almond in his own emphatic, earnest solemn manner, than

by any other. We were particularly struck with the accordance of the sound to the sense in his reading. Both in singing and reading there seems generally to be a determination to utterly disregard the analogy between sense and sound; but the subject of our sketch, in opposition to general practice, varies his manner with the topic. He has one voice for the historical and another for the devotional—one for expressing penitence, another for thanksgiving. This is according to nature, whatever art may say of it. The inferior creation has a voice of alarm, a voice of love, a voice of gratitude, a voice of joy, and is it not incongruous to hear a clergyman thanking God for mercies enjoyed in the same tone of voice in which sin is confessed and lamented? Mr Almond reads the entire services well, but especially the Scriptures. He takes a good hold of the word and enunciates clearly, fully, and forcibly. His pronunciation is generally accurate, and his voice is pleasant and easily audible. His gestures, too, as he reads, are highly appropriate. Instead of mumbling over the service, he throws his whole soul and body into it, and, with uplifted hands and eyes, addresses Him who dwelleth in the heavens. While we thus speak we do not mean to give any opinion of the service itself. Some parts of it might be curtailed and improved with propriety. "Our most religious Queen, Victoria," had better be prayed for as any of her subjects, as it is rather too much to assume that all our kings and queens (including George the IV.) are most religious. But it is not with the formula of the Church, but with the subject of our sketch, we have at present to do—it is of the discharge of his public duties we are speaking, and we repeat that in his hand the services of the church of which he is a clergyman, are very imposing, and may be very profitable. But though we cheerfully concede to Mr Almond those great excellencies which mark his public work, we would with the same freedom state that in some matters there is room for improvement. We never saw in any clergyman so marked a difference in reading and in preaching as in his case. The reading is almost perfect; but in preaching there is occasionally a rapidity and indistinctness painful to the hearer. At times a stranger cannot follow his rapid and indistinct utterance. Would he just preach as

he reads the service, his public services would be immensely improved. He has many of the chief requisites of an attractive orator, and might with a little care, be still more popular. With gestures so correct, and a voice so impressive and well modulated, he might thrill an audience, were his delivery a little more distinct and slow.

His theology is of a very healthy and unobjectionable character. Though he has to address ears polite, he knows nothing in his preaching but Christ Jesus and him crucified. He preaches under the impression that he addresses sinners needing salvation, and instead of complimenting his hearers on their privileges and attainments, he beseeches them to be reconciled to God, and to walk in his commandments and ordinances blameless. His views seem free of the baptismal regeneration and millenarian doctrines. He thinks soberly and has no disposition for the strange and the startling. His appearance effectively seconds his efforts. In person he is of the middle size, and of comparatively slender habit. His scanty grey hairs cover a finely chiselled brow. His features are marked, and his countenance that of the old Puritans. He is a good listener—a rare gift among ministers, advanced in life. In general it is no ordinary infliction to witness an old minister listening to a young one. His looks now patronise, now forbid him—now jealousy, pity, scorn, love alternate. Mr Almond listens just as an ordinary auditor, and leaves the work of criticism till a fitting opportunity.

Mr Almond has been a clergyman thirty years. He was ordained in 1818, and became minister of St Mary's shortly after. He has latterly had a number of assistants, among whom was Mr Robert Montgomery, who afterwards withdrew with some of the people of St Mary's, and after worshipping for some time in a hall in Glasgow, built St Jude's. The congregation is still numerous and very influential, including a considerable portion of the *élite* of the city. We have seldom seen a congregation more devoutly attentive in the sanctuary, and they have oftener than once substantially shown their attachment to their minister.

REV. JAMES BOYD, D.D.,

TRON CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE character of the popular preacher gives considerable insight into the character of the people and of the age. This holds true generally, as well as respects particular congregations. There are, no doubt, great diversities of taste in a city like Glasgow—so much so, indeed, that any one, whatever be his views, may find a number of followers; but the general characteristics of this age are such as to secure for the adventitious and ornamental as hearty a reception as for the real and substantial. The time may arrive when real worth even unadorned will be fully appreciated, but meantime worth must be decorated—gold must be gilded—and beauty must be adorned before they will take. In not a few instances, the showy is preferred to the substantial—sophistry to argument—sound to sense. An era may come when gold in the intellectual and moral world will be considered as precious as gold is held in the commercial world—but meantime it must be set in diamonds, *real* or *spurious*, and appear in certain fantastic forms, or it is rejected. We do not mean to say that real talent at this time of day is not valued—all we assert is that a certain order of talent is often neglected. The philosophy of public speaking is one of the most difficult and curious of subjects, and a full exhibition of the mental calibre of all our most popular speakers might prove interesting data to aid in a search after the leading tastes of the time. Even in the pulpit meretricious graces are still disposed of to good advantage, and, in some cases, the intellectual occupant of our pulpits has to lecture to deserted benches. As we hold these views,

our readers must excuse us though we should discover gems where they are not prepared to expect them, and though we should speak in commendatory terms of those who are comparatively unnoticed and unknown. Our Sketches we wish to be as little biased by general as by denominational opinion—not at all by either. When we meet with gold, we mean to call it gold wherever we find it, and when we discover gilded toys, we shall call them so. Last Sabbath we visited the church where a Chalmers first enchanted our citizens; and though we found that great changes had been effected, there the same gospel preached in former days is preached still. At five minutes past eleven, Dr Boyd, the present incumbent, commenced his usual public exercises by giving out, as the subject of praise, the first four verses of the 84th Psalm, which were pretty well sung by the leader and band, along with some of the congregation. He then engaged in prayer for fifteen minutes, and four more verses having been sung, he announced as his text, Rev. xxii. 16—"I am the bright and morning star." At twenty minutes to twelve, he commenced his discourse by stating, that on the previous Sabbath afternoon he had directed attention to the character of David's Son and David's Lord, and the subject at present was similar, and represented Christ as the bright and morning star. Under the name of stars the ancients indicated all the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon excepted. Such are the order, harmony, beauty, and influence of the heavenly bodies, that many of the heathen nations held that they are endowed with life and power. To guard against this idea Moses takes care to inform the sons of Abraham that in the beginning the moon and stars, however magnificent, owed their existence to God, who had arranged them and appointed them their course to promote the comfort of man. God himself is the Father of Lights; and previous to his advent, Christ had been foretold as the star to come out of Jacob, and after his death, resurrection and ascension, He announces in our text, "I am the bright and morning star," possessed of all the influence ascribed to these bodies. On this text we observe, first, that as the morning star, in addition to shining as other stars, introduces the day, Christ, by his rising on our world, introduced day—the day of the gos-

pel &c. &c. But, secondly, our Lord and Saviour, by his rising on the heart, introduces a day of salvation. In the case of every individual turned to himself, he commences a day of power. We have seen superstition and will worship dissipated at the brightness of his coming; but though the shades of ignorance and idolatry have been dispelled, there are hearts in our world unenlightened—those who pass from the cradle to the grave without seeing the light which enlightens every one who comes into the spiritual world. It is not enough to hear of him as a Saviour, and that he saves to the very uttermost—our eyes must be unsealed that we see the King in his beauty—our affections must be drawn out after him. What though the sun shine in his splendour on the world, if we had no organs of vision—the finest scenes would be by us unperceived; and what though the Sun of Righteousness has arisen if he has not “shined in our hearts” to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. He may throw his beams over the world, but unless our understandings are enlightened, we will not see the excellence of the Lord. The day-star must arise in our hearts else we remain in darkness. Then, and not till then, are we called out of darkness into marvellous light. Then are sinners adopted into the family of God, and raised to the hopes of immortality. But, thirdly, Christ, as the morning star, will introduce eternal day to his people at the end of the world. The Christian life here, however happy, has its drawbacks. There is much remaining darkness—the mind is sometimes in error, and the heart is fearful, and the soul troubled and cast down with perplexing difficulties. The ordinances of religion are frequently observed without profit, and the struggles of the mysterious warfare are severe beyond all thought or expression. You, though heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, may suffer deeply through the temptations of the world, and from the hidings of God’s face you pronounce yourselves forsaken and forgotten. Whilst in a cottage of clay the shadows of night overtake you, and you are surrounded with darkness and terror, but before the brightness of eternity the clouds shall flee away for ever. The shades and darkness which enveloped the believer shall be then for ever dissipated, and he shall adore the great and marvellous ways of God.

the objective, or the great object of enlightenment, Christ Jesus, and the effects of his appearance on the prevailing forms of religion and infidelity. The second dealt exclusively with Christianity as received in the human soul. The confounding of these several departments has produced incalculable mischief in the church of Christ. Many are taught to believe that the objective is the only means of Christianity—that all essential to salvation is Christian privilege and profession, but the above discourse very forcibly shows that the light shining around men may only add to the intensity of the inward darkness and to the condemnation of those who love the darkness more than the light. The illustrations of this inward illumination were particularly striking, and were as neatly expressed as luminously conceived. By a natural gradation the preacher proceeded from the dawn of christianity on the world to its dawn in the human soul, and then to the dawn of a happy immortality. He was also felicitous in contrasting the present state of the Christian with that fullness of joy which will for ever be participated in at God's right hand. Here the language of the preacher rose with the loftiness of the subject as he expatiated on the ineffable glories which await the redeemed from among men.

Besides the excellence of the preacher's matter, his manner recommends his message. That manner is sober, chaste, and dignified, almost to excess. He has a strong and musical voice under thorough control. In order to allow scope for the full sweep of his voice, his sentences are always simple and often highly rhetorical, and every one of them is delivered with the strictest propriety. Though his notes be before him he seldom looks at them. His gestures, too, are proper—severely chaste. Every movement of his hand and body is in unexceptionable keeping. Though he would scorn to have recourse to any of the clap-trap of the popular demagogue, yet we cannot help remarking that a little more energy of delivery would add immensely to his popularity. We know no reason why he should not be one of the most popular—as he is unquestionably one of the most chaste and philosophical—preachers of his time. With a voice that could not be improved—a command of language which never deserts him—

a venerable and commanding *presence*—and a chaste and lucid diction, he only requires a little of the *furor* of the orator to draw after him crowded audiences. Dr Boyd has particular difficulties to contend with in his present sphere. His eloquent predecessors in the Tron Church not only left the communion of that church, but carried with them the greater number of the auditors. Who would not follow where Chalmers—who, for a time, officiated in the Tron Church—leads? and who would remain when the strong and accomplished Buchanan leaves? We deem it necessary to express ourselves strongly regarding the subject of our sketch, because he is one of the few who are not aware of their strength. It is quite a mistake to suppose that every man over-estimates his abilities. In not a few cases, the estimate is on the other side, and the consequences are most injurious. For one injured by an over-estimate of his ability, probably there are two ruined by an under-estimate of it. Many men and ministers are a great deal too humble! They allow others to lead and control them when they are much better fitted to be leaders themselves. The most sensible thing we ever read in the writings of an American author (who has lately excited some stir in our city), is on this subject. He teaches men to call no man father. Instead of being terrified with the names of the great, he says every one should add, “Well, I also am a man—why should I be second even to these?” Let it not be thought from the above remarks that we are encouraging conceit or pride. Many see no refuge from a particular error, but by running into an opposite one. Hateful as is pride in all, and more hateful still as it is in ministers, a crouching servility—an affected humility—a want of confidence in one’s self is, if possible, more hateful still. While pride should be shunned as would its author, it were well to never forget that there are other virtues besides humility. Fortitude should be added to faith; boldness to intelligence.

Dr Boyd is above the middle size, and of comparatively full habit. His features are deeply indented, indicating that he has put forth vigorous intellectual effort. His thick grey hair partly conceals a well developed brow, and his appearance is venerable and commanding. He was ordained in 1818, and

after labouring for a number of years at Ochiltree, he was translated to Glasgow in 1844, the Tron pulpit being vacated at the Disruption. The greater part of the congregation left along with the minister, and now worship in the Free Tron, on Bell's Hill. Dr Boyd, on coming to Glasgow, found the Tron in a great measure deserted, and the congregation is still comparatively small. Shortly after his coming to Glasgow the senate of our University conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. We hope the people of Glasgow will show that they can appreciate talent when it appears in its simplicity without any meretricious ornament. We are happy in stating that his people are ardently attached to his person and ministry. They will do well to hold up his hands, and to encourage him in all his labours.

MARCH 4, 1848.

REV. A. N. SOMMERVILLE,

ANDERSTON FREE CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE man of pleasure frequents his place of amusement with ardour and enthusiasm, though he has no higher object than a momentary gratification. The heart of the man of science beats high as he proceeds to the meeting of the association to listen to those discoveries which may add to the comfort or facilitate the progress of society. The right-hearted Christian visits the house of God with holier aspirations and nobler aims than either the man of pleasure or the man of science as they proceed to their favourite resorts. He goes to "meet with God yonder"—to worship at His holy temple—to mingle his sympathies with kindred hearts—to listen to the teachings of the sanctuary—to sing, to pray, and to enjoy the good of God's house. There the mind, after the toils and chaffings of the week, is tranquillised—there the finest feelings of the heart are called into exercise. The whole inner man is strengthened and invigorated, so that the Christian goes on his way rejoicing. In proportion to the greatness of the expectation indulged, in proceeding to the sanctuary, is the disappointment when the minister is inefficient and incompetent. When the mind, instead of being led to the green pastures beside the still waters, is confused and perplexed with unintelligible jargon—when instead of the lucid statement—the heart-stirring appeal—there is vapid rhodomontade. Instead of the heart being warmed by the Scriptures being opened up, wrath is aroused by hearing the sacred oracles misquoted, misapplied, and distorted, and the only feeling excited is that of pity for the

official, and the only thought the hour of dismissal. There may, in some cases, be disappointment when the service is led by the clergyman expected. That disappointment may be owing to the want of preparation in the speaker, or it may be, and often is, on the part of the hearer. It is but just that those depart disappointed who expected nothing. Most cases of disappointment, however, are occasioned by inefficient supply. Some of our ablest ministers seem to have a desire that their places should be occupied with most inefficient persons. If not by design, it is at least unfortunate that a people accustomed to the services of an able clergyman should be subjected to listen to those who cannot think, and who, of course, cannot speak. We know nothing more intolerable than for a congregation to listen two hours to matter ill arranged and worse expressed. Those clergymen who select such supply must have strong faith, not only in the axiom that extremes meet, but that they meet with good effect—that their own sermons are greatly enhanced by an occasional soporific being administered to their people. Such should remember that, though nonsense may do very well with those who know no better, it is not particularly palatable to a congregation accustomed to efficient teaching. Much better shut the church doors than admit those inapt to teach. We know not how it generally fares with the Free Church congregation of Anderson as regards occasional supplies, but we should think that if there is disappointment when the services are conducted by the minister of the church, it deserves inquiry as to whether the preacher or the hearer is to blame. There the services are so conducted, that he who cannot profit would do well to look internally for the cause.

At five minutes past two, last Sabbath afternoon, Mr. Sommerville commenced his usual afternoon service. The singing occupied about twelve minutes, and was followed by prayer, which was over at half-past two. He then read the last nine verses of the 10th chapter of Proverbs—expounding each verse as he read it. The remarks were terse, brief and practical. The expository remarks occupied about a quarter of an hour, and were followed by praise. At seven minutes to three, he gave out as his text, John vi. 40, "And

this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The preacher commenced by stating that the Divine Saviour had just been saying, as he addressed the people, in the context, "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me;" and, lest any should be stumbled at the statement, he adds, "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He then adds, in order to show that the Father was as much interested in salvation as himself, "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." And this is the Father's will, he says in the text, "that every one who seeth the Son," &c. Christ thus reads, as it were, from the everlasting covenant, that what had been given him in eternity, should be carefully preserved—both soul and body. Christ not merely states God's eternal purpose and eternal salvation—he states also the way in which his purposes are fulfilled—"And this is the will of Him," &c. The text is thus explanatory of the Father's purposes—it is the intermediate link, or means, between the purpose and its ultimate results. We remark from this text—1st, The state implied; 2d, The preciousness and suitableness of Christ; and, 3d, The appointed method of applying to Christ for salvation. Our space excludes the illustration of the two first particulars. Thirdly, and lastly, The appointed method of the application of the sinner for salvation is pointed out in the text. Two things are stated—*seeing* the Son and *believing* on him. The terms "*seeing*" and "*believing*" are used interchangeably in Scripture, and here the latter is supposed by many to be merely explanatory of the former—the believing of the seeing. Still, however, there may be some difference. Seeing and believing do not necessarily imply the same idea. Seeing cannot refer to the outward presence of the man Christ Jesus. By seeing, is clearly meant the spiritual discernment of Christ. There must be a distinct idea of Christ as a Saviour, and of the way of salvation through him. Many hold erroneous ideas of the way of a sinner's acceptance. There must be a distinct understanding in the mind of the way in which Christ accomplishes his work as Mediator, and not a blind faith, such as the poor papists have, when they take the testimony of a man, and not

the Word of the living God. We must know the object of faith—God in Christ as a Saviour, if the great effects in the soul would follow. Then the soul is gradually assimilated into the image of Christ. But even this distinct perception of Christ, and of the way of salvation by Him, is not enough. There must be a positive discovery—not to the eye or the imagination, but to the heart—of Christ's excellence and preciousness. In the Word, Christ is to be found. It is the gallery in which the King is held. Still it is not enough to be familiar with the galleries—the Word, Christ must declare himself to the soul. He maketh that discovery in and through the Word, &c. &c.

The discourse was over at four o'clock, having occupied an hour and seven minutes. After baptism was administered, and an immense number of advertisements read, the congregation was dismissed at a quarter past four o'clock.

From the above outline our readers will be satisfied that Mr Sommerville, as a preacher, belongs to a very superior class. The text and context form one of those passages which have occasioned the fall of many in Israel. The superficial expounder, when he attempts it, leaves it much more difficult and mysterious than he found it. The man of a particular system finds support for it in the passage, and the man of tender conscience has been afraid to encounter it. The few introductory sentences of the above discourse, while they leave the passage all its majesty and importance, show that it contains nothing to stumble the weakest, and everything to encourage the anxious inquirer. The text he shows to be the exponent of the hard saying in the preceding context as to the definitiveness of the Father's will in saving men. Having prepared his way by ably determining the connexion between the text and its context, the preacher announced a very complete division—a division not suggested so much by the *words* as by the sense of the passage. Nothing can be easier than to divide a text according to the obvious verbal order, and in some cases such a division is unexceptionable; but in other cases, such as the one before us, the sense alone leads to a proper arrangement. The first division, though not stated formally in the text, was indispensable to the full appreciation of the others.

The state of death in which all men lie must be explained before either the preciousness of the Saviour or of his salvation can be understood, and then the third division (the way in which men receive the blessing indicated in the text) beautifully terminated the discourse. It should be specially observed that the preacher, in his illustrations, entirely avoided a very common error, that of allowing the illustration of one division to interfere with the others. The preciousness and suitability of Christ were treated exclusively objectively in the second division, and in the last division subjectively. The discourse, in a word, was complete in its matter, in its arrangement, and in its illustrations. The matter included all essential to be known, the arrangement simplified the plan of salvation, so as to make it intelligible to the feeblest capacity, and the illustrations were clear and appropriate. Still, however, these remarks leave the chief excellencies of the discourse untouched. A discourse may be unexceptionable as to its logic, as to its diction, and even as to its theology, and yet be very deficient. Many sermons are a great deal too *theological*. Theology and religion, it is to be observed, are not synonymous terms. Much of theology is not even the symbol or exponent of religion. It was one of the beauties of the preceding discourse, that while its theology was healthful and unexceptionable it was emphatically religious. We wish to make a broad distinction between a jingle of doctrines technically expressed and the simple expression of genuine religion. We say nothing against dogmatic theology, it is indispensable in its place; but the tendency of the present day is to substitute it in the room of a heartfelt religion. The tendency is to stuff the head with dogmas, and distinctions, and forms, while the heart is left cold and unimpressed. The preacher taught what is called the doctrine of human depravity without employing any of the common phraseology in which that doctrine is couched and concealed. He made his hearers feel as well as think. Some preachers set their hearers to treat theology much as they would treat geometry. They can calculate the relations and connexions of these with as much coolness as if they were squaring the circle, or determining the relations of certain numbers; but Mr Somerville touches the chords of the heart as well as em-

employs the intellectual faculties. In hearing him there is no tendency to enter on speculative theology—to discuss curious and difficult doctrines—to doubt or to deny what is stated—the judgment, the conscience, the affections, are all carried resistlessly along—not by rhetorical display—not by an imposing and inflated diction—but by sober truth, stated in sober language. Indeed, the preacher is often all quiescence, when his auditors are most interested and excited. At times he does rise with his subject, till he displays the power of the orator as well as of the Christian philosopher; but he rises only with the majesty of the subject. The sound and the sense are in the inverse ratio with some. When they have nothing worth saying, they declaim and thunder, so as to astonish the ill-informed and to disgust the intelligent; but our preacher, when his voice swells, and his hands are raised, and his countenance brightens, gives birth to great thought, in a graphic and simple diction. It will be observed that he carefully discriminated, not only between an objective perception of Christ, and a subjective reception of him, but also between occasional and transitory views, which, for a time, move the affections, but never gain the heart, and that commanding realisation of the way of salvation, which makes all things new. Here he not only distinguished between speculative and practical religion, but between occasional visitations of seriousness, and the development of real Christian character.

The simplicity of the preacher's views demands notice. The text and context have afforded scope for the mystic on the one hand, and the rationalist on the other. The mystic bewilders himself and his auditors among the deep things which the text indicates, and the rationalist explains the passage away as meaning nothing but a bare assent to historical Christianity. The preacher steered clear of both extremes. On the one hand vindicating the sovereignty of God, and on the other the responsibility of man—correctly assuming that God's sovereignty is most eminently displayed in making room for the choice and for the unconstrained action of men. The discourse, in a word, was neither more nor less difficult than the passage on which it was founded, and neither involves any stumblingblock to the devout and humble inquirer.

The manner of the preacher gives efficacy to his matter. He displays a confidence which never deserts him. When he commences his discourse he appears, almost provokingly, cool and even careless in his style and delivery. He hesitates without embarrassment, and stops at almost every word without causing uneasiness to his hearers, inasmuch as the pause seems the result of choice rather than of necessity. His small voice echoes quietly through the church—falling on each ear pleasantly and not unmusically. As he proceeds, however, his voice rises, and his hands, aloft, occasionally meet, and the diction becomes more graceful and rapid, and the hesitancy disappears, and the periods become stately, and the rhetoric unexceptionable.

We have heard only one complaint to his public services, and we suspect that complaint is but too well founded—it is their unreasonable length. We say unreasonable, because a service protracted beyond the usual time interferes with family and domestic arrangements.

Mr Sommerville is above the middle size, and of thin habit. His thick hair partly conceals a broad and lofty brow. His eye is penetrating, and his countenance bespeaks firmness and dignity. His appearance is graceful and commanding. He has been ten years in Glasgow, and was a minister of the Established Church till the disruption, when he and his people became part of the Free Church. His church is of peculiar construction—wide and low—without any gallery. We understand, however, that a new and much larger place of worship is to be built for him shortly, as many anxious to obtain seats are unable to find them. His congregation is large and influential, including a number of highly-respectable families. He is much beloved by his people, and highly respected by the community generally.

[Since the above was written an elegant church has been built on the site of the old.—ED.]

MARCH 11, 1848.

REV. PATRICK M'FARLANE, D.D.,

FREE CHURCH, GREENOCK.

THERE are some men whose real character can be disclosed only by time. The shrewdest, when they attempt to scan them, only prove their own shortsightedness. Though the experience of thousands of years proves man to be an incompetent judge of his fellows, the desire to experiment in that way is almost universal. The character of some is so transparent that mistake is almost impossible, but that very transparency, by the jealous and suspicious, is occasionally made the occasion of misgiving and surmise. Such are supposed to be acting in disguise—to be concealing their real views and intentions—and predictions loud and numerous are risked that time will display some lurking master passion, and reveal what for many a day has been carefully hid. Dr P. M'Farlane has been the means of discovering more false prophets than any other living minister. Before the disruption in 1843 who did not predict that, though the doctor took part with the Non-intrusionists, he would take care and not endanger his living? Not only did those who know nothing of the motives and principles of Christianity foretell, with certainty, his remaining in possession of his manse, glebe, and living, but religious men of all denominations, not excluding his own ministerial brethren, had their doubts as to the matter. With larger emoluments than almost any other clergyman of the Church of Scotland—with firm, unshaken faith in the principle of an Established Church, and with no very lofty idea of the standing and character of Dissenters—every one thought it perfectly safe to risk his character as a prophet in affirming that, leave the

National Church who would, the minister of the "West Kirk," Greenock, would hold firm possession. But the crisis came, and, with a firmness and loftiness of purpose rarely equalled, the mis-understood and maligned Dr M'Farlane bade farewell to his temporal possessions, and, at the urgency of principle, threw himself on the uncertainties of the future. His example encouraged hesitating hundreds. When others saw the man who had most to lose making no account of houses, and lands, and living, they could not hesitate to follow an example so disinterested. We believe that—apart from the merits of the question which caused the disruption—a high sense of honour, a regard for character, would have induced the subject of our sketch to relinquish the National Church. He had "opened his mouth," and he could not go back. He would sooner starve than impair the integrity and honour of his character. We mean not to say that he had made a rash vow. On the contrary, he no doubt calculated the cost and was prepared for the worst before he said anything of the subject; but when others compromised the matter and looked for a way of escape, a high sense of honour made him take the step manfully and never cast a wistful look behind. Though those who never felt the power of religious principle cannot understand such sacrifices, Christianity has ever had in its number those who, while they are thankful for temporal blessings, can bid them adieu without a murmur when the retention of them would injure their conscience. Many have laid down life itself rather than seem to compromise their principles, and though the days of martyrology are now gone by, we do the subject of our sketch and many others no more than justice when we say that the same spirit, that braved the gibbet and the flames, of former days, actuates them still, and that he who can surrender all that he has for his conscience, would, if necessity were laid upon him, surrender life too, if it could not be retained but at the expense of his Christianity.

Last Sabbath, at seven minutes past eleven, the subject of our sketch entered the pulpit of the Free Church, Renfield street, formerly the church of the Rev. Dr Willis, now a professor in a Free Church College, Canada. The service being introductory to the labours of the Rev. Mr Bonar, the new

pastor of the church, the 68th Psalm—from the 7th to the 12th verse—was sung. The singing and following prayer occupied half an hour. A chapter was then read, and singing again engaged in, which occupied another quarter, so that when the introductory services were over it was but eight minutes to twelve. At that time 2 Cor. iv. 1–2 was given out as the subject of discourse. The words chiefly discussed were in verse 2d, “By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

The order of his discourse was admirable. The introductory remarks were explanatory of the doctrinal and logical connexion of the text. In many cases, the division of the epistles, into chapters, breaks the sense or argument, but the preacher did not allow that division to determine the connexion of his text. In a few sentences, he explained the bearing of the somewhat difficult reasoning of the chapter preceding the text, and then elucidated the inferential character of the passage he discussed. Besides teaching the duties of the pastorate, he showed how it rebuked the false teachers whose character and pretensions it was one of the designs of the epistle to disclose. The two aspects of ministerial duty were presented in a strong light by the general division of *negative* and *positive*. On the negative the preacher rapidly enumerated the false doctrines which the ministers of Christianity are to avoid; and, on the positive, the subject matter of evangelical teaching was strikingly brought out. With the positive aspect of ministerial duty the discourse was chiefly occupied. The preacher comprehensively answered the great question, “What is truth?” and then showed how that objective truth was to be subjectively taught, and, finally, how the honest teaching of the truth commends the teacher to the esteem and love of the good, and to the respect of the bad. These several topics were handled with much ability and with great discrimination. The only difficulty was to follow the train of thought pursued. The discourse contained a superabundance of ideas, and in that respect formed a contrast with the discourses of the Chalmersian school. That school can so decorate and diversify an idea as to delight an audience with it for an hour; whereas the discourse in question contained so

much truth that it required the closest attention to secure the thoughts that were profusely scattered—not clothed in the rich drapery of a florid imagination, but standing forth in the stern and stately form of the chiselled marble. In other words, the views were stated in precise and measured diction, when illustration would have vastly popularised them. Truth is most majestic when least adorned; but it must be observed that the Bible itself teaches but seldom in the abstract. It finds the symbols of truth in the external universe. The perfections of God it teaches in their connexion with the fair things and the lovely of His creation. The image of God, into which it is its great object to assimilate man, it exhibits as mirrored in the moral relationships established among men; and even the sublime doctrine of atonement is brought forward in the shape of facts. There is a tangibility about the teachings of the Bible which even those, who use the concrete most, cannot approach. If we would venture a suggestion regarding a sermon of such high excellence, it would be that it contained too much truth—much more than the auditors could apprehend or appreciate. This, perhaps, was almost inseparable from the subject, which was a professed epitome of revealed truth. Abstract as the discourse appeared, it was only a rapid generalization of the doctrines and duties of the Bible. The preacher might have clothed a few of the ideas he stated in an attractive dress, but to illustrate them all was, we readily grant, impossible.

The practical character of the discourse deserves notice. While he exhibited objective truth, he never omitted to refer to its subjective or experimental application to the mind and heart. The truth he showed was not an abstract system designed to afford scope for imagination and speculation, but, on the contrary, a powerful instrument for moulding the whole character and conduct into conformity with the revealed will of God. Nor does he present this aspect of truth merely as a part of his duty. The earnest look, the emphatic enunciation, and deep seriousness, all combine to give effect to his lessons, and prove that they are held by himself, not as theories, but as intelligent convictions—as the real sentiments of his own mind.

Those who have formed their idea of the preacher, from what was said of him by friends and foes at the time of the

memorable Disruption, find, on seeing and hearing him, that the idea was incorrect. He has not only none of the attributes of a popular demagogue, but his appearance is simplicity, mildness, gentleness, and timidity. Those who wish to form a correct estimate of him must fancy a tall thin figure—a cranium finely chiselled, and bare as the autumn field. From beneath a finely arched brow a pair of small eyes twinkle so clearly that they refuse artificial aid. The mouth is the index of thoughtful repose, and the entire countenance, which is pale and open, beams with benignity and conscious superiority. On entering the pulpit, he sits at his ease, casting a hasty glance here and there throughout the place of worship. On rising, he announces, in a sharp, clear voice, the subject of praise, and reads distinctly and firmly the psalm or paraphrase. The same clear, sharp tone of voice is continued in prayer, which is offered with fluency and ease, and occasionally at great length. His prayers embrace a general view of the position of man as a sinner and suppliant, and of the duties and responsibilities connected with a state of probation. Towards the end he glances at the state of the nation—of the interests of the Church of God, and of the congregation to which he ministers. His manner in preaching is calm and energetic. He is more of a teacher than an orator. His language is simple, neat, and accurate, and his pronunciation good. We have said his pulpit appearances are chiefly didactical, but occasionally he displays the gifts, and not a few of the graces, of the orator. His fine clear voice at times is raised, his utterance becomes rapid, his gestures graceful; while the syren sounds steal into every heart, and awaken emotions and thoughts of a devout and profitable character. In the earlier part of his ministry, his preaching was more rhetorical than it is at present, and his published sermons bear marks of taste and talent, of clear thought and careful diction, of an ardent heart and a musical ear.

Dr M'Farlane was ordained at Kippen, in 1806, and was from thence transmitted to Polmont. He officiated some time in St John's Church previous to the settlement of Dr Thomas Brown, and from thence he was transferred to St Enoch's. Having been presented to the West Church, Greenock, one of

the best livings in the Church of Scotland, he went to that town in the year 1834, and has laboured there since. At the Disruption his people built him a place of worship, and they remain ardently attached to his person and ministry. He has commended himself to their consciences, by his life as well as his doctrine, and is alike respected by all classes of the community. He exerts a wide influence in Greenock and throughout the Free Church, and it has been hinted that he deserves the professional honours of the Free Church. It is probable, however, that he will remain among the people who firmly stood by him in the time of trial, and who, according to report, supply his temporal necessities as liberally as those of any clergyman of the church to which he belongs.

MARCH 25, 1842.

VERY REV. DUNCAN MACFARLAN, D.D.,

CATHEDRAL, GLASGOW.

HERO worship is much more general than many suppose. The several organs of veneration, benevolence, &c., seem to demand some embodiment of the object to which each has reference. The heathen deities owed their existence to this principle. The predominant feeling of the perverted fancies of the heathen demanded an object of similar passions and propensities. Even those who acknowledge the Brightness of the Father's glory as the impersonification of all excellence, contemplate many subordinate types. The man of war requires to keep, in his eye, some such object as the hero of a hundred fights. The man of philanthropy fires his zeal, by tracing the history of a Howard. The man of song associates with the sweet singer of Israel his national and local songsters. These persons become as much the symbol of peculiar feeling, as the olive branch is the emblem of peace. They are enshrined in the mind, and become a part of its furniture. But besides these general aids of thought and feeling, there are local characters which fix the regards of different classes, and sometimes of a large part of the community. Every congregation consider the person and character of their minister as sacred. They associate him with their devotional feelings, and enshrine him among their holiest affections. Some few clergymen in addition to the confidence of their own congregation, enjoy the respect and esteem of the city or country in which they live and labour. Some of these have made to themselves renown by their active and untiring philanthropy—some by their commanding pulpit eloquence, and some by

their efforts through the press. Some of them, after a period of protracted ecclesiastical warfare, enjoy the reputation of the successful warrior, who, after his conquests, enjoys his tranquillity; and others remain passive while the people, among whom they live, create them distinction and honour. The subject of our sketch, though his philanthropy has never been doubted, has made no ostentatious display sufficient to secure the plaudits of the citizens; and his pulpit appearances, though respectable, no one ever supposed beyond mediocrity. As a man of ecclesiastical war he wears no laurels, and as an author his reputation is unknown. Yet Dr Macfarlan is widely known and universally respected. In the highest church courts he is listened to with more than attention. In the University, hundreds of students—who in times of academical warfare when some question is pending respect no one else—generally listen to his counsels and accept his reproof. In public meetings, whether of a political or educational character, all classes listen to him as to an oracle, and whenever he is seen in the place of concourse, young and old yield him respectful homage. Unquestionably his high position as Principal of Glasgow College, and as one who ministers within the walls of Glasgow Cathedral, invests him with adventitious honour; but that of itself would not account for his celebrity. There have been heads of universities only despised, and cathedral clergymen of little or no name. The philosophical mind who can properly appreciate the value of adventitious circumstances, will seek other facts to account for the Principal's high reputation.

Principal Macfarlan enjoys the honour yielded, to a long life of opinionative and practical consistency. His hoary head is a crown of glory, because he has ever been found consistent in his views and actions. During his long career, as far as is known, he never had a doubt of the efficiency and authority of the National Church. He ever considered it essential for the nation, as such, to sanction some form of national religion, and to maintain it from the public treasury. Now, while the man who is consistent in a cause decidedly evil, or in holding views decidedly detrimental to society, is abjured and abhorred, the public deals charitably in matters regarding which it doubts or is divided. The great majority of the people of

Glasgow hold views different from the Principal as regards ecclesiastical matters. In his younger days the majority of the citizens of Glasgow approved of the principle of an establishment, but as he remained at his post, the people passed over to the other side, till dissent numbered thousands for his hundreds; and he was not on that account despised. He firmly held the ecclesiastical faith which the majority of other days professed, and while they changed their views they gave him credit for holding his. There are few things which thinking persons more despise than fickleness of ecclesiastical views. They honour the man who, on seeing a more excellent way, renounces, after much care and thought, the Church in which he was baptised and brought up; but when change succeeds change for reasons less urgent than principle, such soon lose caste and credit, and their opinions on every question are henceforth received with doubt. The subject of our sketch never thus shook confidence in his sagacity and steadfastness. The views he held half a century ago he cherishes still. On the subject of the change of ecclesiastical opinions, and the length one may go safely for his credit as well as for his conscience, we quote with pleasure the opinion of the Principal himself:—

“ Even the visible Church of Christ has, almost from its foundation, been split into numerous sects and parties, distinguished sometimes by differences or degrees of opinions, but more frequently by forms of expression, or by trifling and immaterial distinctions. These differences of opinion are multiplied till they become almost innumerable, and are often prosecuted with a bitterness, a spirit of persecution disgraceful to those by whom it is indulged, and inconsistent with the genuine spirit of the Gospel. All are liable to err—none are secure from falling into mistake; and, therefore, he whose judgment is convinced that he has embraced an erroneous opinion or pursued an unsuitable form of worship, is not only justified in changing it, but bound to renounce his errors, to adopt a purer system of belief, and a more scriptural form of worship. Such we do not condemn; but there are many who, in the changes they make of worship, cannot be regarded with such charity, and upon whose conduct we cannot put such a favourable con-

struction. There are many who, from pure fickleness and love of change, are carried about with every wind of doctrine; many have no root in themselves, and therefore become the deluded followers of every new instructor, of every arrogant pretender to superior knowledge or holiness. Many there are who indulge an ambitious spirit, and are most desirous to be leaders in the society to which they belong; but finding this impossible where they have been long and well known, and inconsistent with the principles of a well regulated society, they betake themselves to some new system which they wish to dictate to the consciences of their brethren."

The Principal, as appears from the above, instead of denouncing those who left the National Church, displays that charity which enhances greatly his own reputation.

But besides the consistency of his views the Principal owes much to his *vigorous and never-failing common sense*. It is indeed to this rare quality that he is indebted for his honours. In meetings of presbyteries and synods it has secured him the unlimited confidence of many of his ministerial brethren. He is well acquainted with the forms of the Church, and his strong common sense makes precedent and precept tell with the best effect on the case in question. But this quality is of equal service to him on all public occasions where extempore effort is required. Many fail on such occasions, not because they lack information, but because they know not how and when to bring forward their knowledge. Such is the sagacity of the Principal that he can use his knowledge to its full extent in the most effective and unexceptionable manner. Fully conscious of his own power in that respect, he states his case firmly, forcibly, and intelligently. Whether right or wrong, he brings forward his views in the best form and at the best time. The deference shown him by his clerical brethren and by the professors in the college is the more remarkable when it is considered that his acquirements and accomplishments, though respectable, are not remarkable. No one ever supposed him very learned. He daily mixes with persons greatly his superiors both in mental force and literary acquirements, but he can so conduct himself that no deficiency is seen. He may not quote Greek and Latin so glibly as some others

—he may not display the same extensive knowledge of philosophy or language, but his good sense prevents him from ever committing himself, and his weight of character shields him from being despised. He combines much of the past with the present. While he is not ignorant of the present times, he is an embodiment of the Principal of half a century ago. His appearance and his pronunciation, and some of his opinions naturally lead us back to the commencement of this century, while the way he manages his work shows that he is wide awake to the present and its requirements. It must also be mentioned that his are the manners of the gentleman. Though there may be less suavity than some desiderate, there is the dignity which becomes his office. We are not aware that he comes much in contact with the poor and humble, but his public offices and his more private duties are performed with a due regard to decorum. There may be more than enough of stiffness and distance occasionally, but there is also the entire absence of the pretender and mountebank. Some may dread him, but none dare despise him.

As a preacher it is not very easy to convey a correct idea of his pulpit appearances which are not now what they were a quarter of a century ago. His lecturing is a running exposition *spoken* rather than delivered, and in preaching he might be supposed to be *talking* rather than sermonising to a public assembly. Indeed, it is evident that he has fully served his time as a preacher, and ought to be relieved from a duty for which the pressure of years has incapacitated him. Many who formerly were edified with his discourses are compelled to seek edification elsewhere. It ought to satisfy himself that he should give up pulpit duties when he remembers that while his public reputation still increases, the benches in the High Church are less occupied than formerly. Indeed, his continuing to preach displays less of the quality we have lauded him for than any other of his proceedings. Those accustomed to hear him in his former years testify that his manner was animated as well as dignified, and that his lectures were full of important instructions. But though we have no opportunity now of determining what was his *manner* in his best days, fortunately his *manner* has been preserved. A number of his

discourses were taken from his lips and given to the public, and from these we may gather something of the matter of his discourses. After perusing these with care, and after hearing him frequently of late, we have gathered the following facts and opinions:—There is nothing in his discourses to which the most fastidious theologian or ecclesiastic can object. His common sense prevents him alike from the doubtful and the erroneous. What he says of God as Creator, of Christ as the Redeemer of mankind, and of the Holy Spirit as the Sanctifier, of man as a sinner, and man as saved—is altogether invulnerable. There is not a sentence which orthodoxy could assail as erroneous or even doubtful. He moreover speaks in a plain nervous style, and reasons with cogency and ease. We refer to his recent tract on the Sabbath as proof of the vigour of his style and the ability of his argumentation. But while we cheerfully concede to the Principal all these excellencies, it must also be mentioned that while we dislike names, unless as far as they are expressive of opinions, the Principal has always been ranked among the *Moderates* of the Church of Scotland. We are not aware that he even dislikes the name, but at all events he classes among those to whom it has been applied. We have no other word so expressive of the views of this class. They hold *moderate* views of ecclesiastics and of theology. They admit the right of civil authority to control to a certain extent the movements of a national church, and they admit the Confession of Faith as containing a summary of their belief. Their preaching is characterised by defect rather than by positive error. It contains more of the law than of the gospel—more of precept than of promise—more of the letter than of the spirit. They preach Christ that he is the Son of God, but they say little of his grace or of his atonement. Instead of making the cross the centre from which all other doctrines and duties radiate, the cross is seldom mentioned at all, and only in a passing manner.

In speaking of the causes which induced some of Christ's follower's to leave him, the Principal, in a discourse on the text, Psalm lxxx. 18, says, "When our Lord began to denounce the backwardness and prejudices of his countrymen, many who for a time had been his followers went back and

walked no more with him." It is worthy of remark that it was the distinctive features of the gospel that induced these referred to (in the above extract) to leave Christ. He had been teaching them (see John vi. 46—55) that except they ate the flesh and drank the blood of the Son of man they had no life in them, and that hard saying, which indicated union with the Saviour, made many leave him. To such matters, however, the discourse makes no reference. In another discourse published in July, 1833, on the text, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things," the preacher proposed to consider, First, Who is he that overcometh; and, Second, What is the nature of the inheritance promised. On the first he properly states that faith is the first qualification of him that overcomes, quoting the passage, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;" and the other passage, "Who is he that overcometh but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" but throughout a long illustration of that particular, he makes no reference to the object of faith of a satisfactory character. Faith in Christ he thus states—"He who by Jesus Christ believes in God—he who setteth the Lord always before him—who in all his thoughts, &c., must be restrained from forfeiting his favour and incurring his displeasure." It would seem by the above that believing in Christ means only believing in God through Christ. We are quite aware that the scripture speaks of those who by Christ believe in God who raised him from the dead; but the meaning and references are wholly different from this. Farther on, indeed, he speaks of Jesus as the Judge, but neither in that nor in any other place does he say much of Him as a Saviour. We might multiply instances which prove that the doctrines of the cross form no prominent part of the Principal's discourses. They enforce the propriety of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, but they say little of the glory of Christ's person or of his work. Such is moderate preaching, and its effects are described by the lamented Chalmers, who, after he had tried it for more than twelve years, eloquently stated the results, (which is quoted in a sketch of Dr Chalmers in a former volume.)

The moderation of the Principal's views as regards missions

demands notice. To show the difference between the Moderate and the Evangelical views of missions, we contrast the views of Dr Duff with those of the Principal—and it must be remembered that both were ministers of the Established Church when the letters were penned. Dr Macfarlan and Dr Duff, in letters to the late gifted Mr Halley, then a divinity student in Glasgow College, thus express themselves on the subject of missions :—

GLASGOW COLLEGE,
17th March, 1845.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge your letter of yesterday's date, inclosing Report of the Association of Students for Missionary Exertions, and conveying their request that I should become a contributor to their funds.

It has long been my decided and avowed opinion, that such exertions on the part of students are premature and injudicious.

The object of their attendance here is to acquire the information, and form the principles, the application of which, in after life, will enable them to pursue valuable ends by worthy and effectual means. To anticipate the period of such exertion, appears to me not only unbecoming the station they now occupy, but full of danger to their future character and usefulness. However laudable may be the purpose of their association, it requires no small share of judgment and observation to select those means of promoting it which are at once safe and effectual.

D. MACFARLAN.

Mr James Halley.

PITLOCHREIE,
7th March, 1837.

MY DEAR SIR,—In the midst of the thunder of clashing interests, and the lightning of angry controversy in this distracted land, oh, how sweet, how refreshing to the soul, to enter the quiet haven of devotion, and there hold communion with the great I AM, and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and the Holy Spirit that enkindles with the fervour of divine love! It is this feature in the organisation of your society—effective as it is in other respects also—that inspires me with the purest joy. An alternate meeting is devoted, you say, to Christian fellowship, prayer, and the reading of missionary exercises. If such meetings were more general, they would be the rallying centres of hope to a divided Church and a bleeding world.

You advert to the chilling influence of academic pursuits on the growth of piety in the soul. Most keenly have I felt it myself. How is it to be obviated? By constantly falling back on the touching and searching simplicity of God's own Word.

ALEXR. DUFF.

To say the least the above is a contrast.

Dr Macfarlan was born in Drymen, which is the South-western part of Stirlingshire, on the South-eastern shore of Lochlomond. He completed his 77th year last week, and has been a clergyman 56 years. He was educated in the University of Glasgow, and succeeded his father as minister in Drymen. He has had a family of four—two sons and two daughters—and is now a widower.

The emoluments of Dr Macfarlan are considerable.

OCTOBER 7, 1848.

REV. ROBERT AITKEN, M.A.,

EPISCOPALIAN CHURCH, COATBRIDGE.

COATBRIDGE has of late become one of the most important and prosperous towns in Scotland. The productions of the mineral kingdom are there manufactured to an extent unequalled in this division of the empire. As a consequence, a great population of the industrial classes has been collected, and till lately these enjoyed more than an average of temporal comfort. To a man of the world Coatbridge is a place of the greatest interest. There vast resources are being unfolded, and there labour finds its home and its reward. There are, however, amid its busy population, more attractive scenes than blazing furnaces, and mightier interests than those bounded by time. Their churches raise their spires to the skies, as it were, to point men to heaven as their final home. Among these the Episcopalian Church shall at present have our attention. On entering that place the stranger is struck with the high moral lessons taught on its very walls. The place of pleasure and of business is decorated with something to allure the passer by. He is promised earthly pleasure or profit would he enter in ; but as soon as one enters the place in question he sees on his right, suspended on the wall, the stern motto, "He that forsaketh not all he hath cannot be my disciple. If any man will come after me he must deny himself, and take up his cross." On the left hand is suspended in the same manner the startling words, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." To encourage the alarmed stranger, he sees suspended before him, "God so loved the world that he sent his Son, that whosoever believeth

in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them," &c. One finds in such a place that he is among solemn realities—that he is surrounded with the emblems of a religion which confers not with flesh and blood—that he is about to grapple with questions which stretch beyond time, and which involve his everlasting well-being. As the service proceeds, he finds that the walls bear faithful testimony to the religion of which that house is the temple. On the right hand and on the left of the worshipper, there are grave monitors—lessons not pleasing to the man of the world—but before him hopes spring up which stretch beyond the skies—which cheer the bed of sickness and even of death, and irradiate the dreary charnel-house with rays from the most excellent glory. In that house, Sabbath after Sabbath, those who must needs engage, and engage earnestly, in the duties of life are to be found, and how striking their position! The mottos we have mentioned remind them that if true worshippers, though in the world they must not be of it—that this is not their home, and that they seek a better country—that they stand in close relationship to God and to a holy and happy universe—that in a word they have taken their place in the temple below, in the hope that the temple made without hands will be their everlasting habitation. But this place, besides being a monitor to the worshippers, stands forth in the midst of a stirring population as a witness for God. We mean not to raise it to any superiority over other churches—we know nothing of consecrated churches any more than of consecrated ground—but still these mottos hung up in the midst of an active people, where even the sacredness of the Sabbath causes but a partial pause in the business of life—where the furnaces ever smoke, and the engine moves day and night—Saturday and Sabbath, have a peculiar significance. There as men amass riches, they speak of self-denial and bearing a cross. While the toil-worn labourer bends with the severity of his employment, these whisper to him in accents of kindness, "Come all ye that labour and are weary, and ye shall find rest to your souls." There, as family after family take

up their residence, a voice says, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them." These things having their due weight, would not retard the things of time, while they would soften the labourer's toil and sweeten his scanty blessings—masters would give what is just, and servants would obey and respect their masters. God acknowledged as dwelling with men, would make a happy society.

The congregation that assembles in the church referred to, met last Sabbath, as usual, at eleven o'clock, and went through the usual services. The introductory service of the forenoon—including part of the communion service—was over at five minutes to one o'clock, when the clergyman announced for his text Matthew xxviii. 5, "Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified." He commenced his discourse by stating that the subject was well adapted for an Easter day sermon. From the lessons in the gospel and epistles which were read it will appear that the services were of a tone different from usual. In the olden time this was reckoned a day of refreshment when believers are pointed to the fact that they are heirs of the promise, even as Isaac was. This day we read of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, indicative of this being a day of abundance in Zion. I have, however, another reason for choosing this subject. A number here are about to communicate for the first time, and I am anxious to speak a word of consolation and encouragement to these. It is a remarkable fact that great sinners were last at the cross, and the first to see where Jesus was laid. This was for a set purpose. Christ's first message, after he arose, was sent to a great sinner—to Peter, who was next to Judas in transgression. Tell the disciples and Peter, said Jesus, that I am risen from the dead. Paul, the persecutor, too, was chosen that in him might be shown forth a pattern of long-suffering to those who would hereafter believe. Blessed be God this is the gospel—there is in it mercy for sinners, even for the chiefest. Where sin has abounded grace shall much more abound. Christ states a reason for this. He says those who are forgiven much love much. I wish to give much comfort to those who have tasted the pardoning mercy of our Lord. Some of you have been forgiven much, and would that you would love

much. Think of Mary Magdalene's love to Christ. On a Sunday morning, long before day, she prepared herself to go to the sepulchre. This is love. She thinks not of the necessity of the case. She never thought of his rising from the tomb. Love is not limited by the law of necessity—never consults whether this is needful or that necessary. Such is love, that it thinks of no necessity. Though it had been perfumed a thousand times before, her errand and object had been the same. It had been done by others, but not by her, and she took spices, and was not behind in showing her attachment to Christ. On therefore she went, nothing doubting but the stone would be rolled away. Nothing will keep an anxious soul from Christ. Does she go and not find Christ? O, never, never is it so with Christ. At times, indeed, when seeking him we may not find all we wish; but the seeking is an act of love, and love looks not for immediate reward. Partial disappointment only incites to seek more earnestly. Mary Magdalene meets an angel if she met not Christ. If you find not his power and his love as you would, seeking him will lead you into good society. We reach the end of spiritual purposes when God is present, when the heavenly hosts are present. Mary Magdalene saw an angel. He sat; and mark his posture. He was sitting on the right side, where the righteous should ever be, and clothed in white—the emblem of purity and the emblem of joy. Oh! when we seek Christ we get into heavenly society. The eye of sense sees nothing, but the eye of faith sees the redeemed soul surrounded by angels and archangels. But a thin cloud intervenes between us and these holy beings, and they see us, and we are made ineffably partakers of their joy and blessedness. Oh! when you are dry in spirit and dull in heart, I know of nothing better than to follow some holy one who has gone before you. It will bring heaven near to you. You know they are in the invisible world, and hope they are for ever with the Lord. There is a natural hardness of the human heart which needs a cure. To think of those who have gone before to glory will prove a stepping-stone to heaven. You may have a brother, or a mother, or a sister in heaven, and you may be the better fitted to dwell with God, by contemplating their bliss. Some of you are about to

he shows to be all parts of a vast whole—all illustrative of the divine glory and emanations of divine beneficence.

But his preaching is remarkable for the character of its theology. It is utterly free of crotchets and mystical allusions. It is simple and plain, almost, as the sermon on the Mount. He deals not in the abstruse. He presents facts before his hearers, and paints the beauties of holiness in historical narrative. Christ, however, is the burden of his preaching. Christ the Creator—Christ the Saviour—and Christ the Judge of the world. He gives great distinctness to the person of Christ, and exhibits him as possessed of the attractive attributes of humanity as well as with all the perfections of Deity. Love to him he represents as the moving cause of all acceptable, religious service, and love to him as the consummation of the happiness of heaven and earth.

His reading of the service is also extremely interesting. On the occasion in question he employed no clerk, but read himself, and the people gave the responses. He chaunts a considerable part of the liturgy, and his fine, soft, sweet voice has a thrilling effect. He reads the Scriptures with great propriety. We were particularly struck with his reading of the 20th chapter of John, where he beautifully accommodated his voice to the different speakers there. The saying of Thomas, "My Lord and my God," he so expressed as to represent the feelings of satisfaction, confidence, and joy, which the apostle felt. The words of Mary Magdalene were also most truthfully and touchingly read. But above all, the words of Jesus, "Woman, why weepest thou—whom seekest thou?" were uttered in accents of kindness and affection enough to secure the confidence of the most suspicious.

It were worth while to visit his place of worship for no other purpose than to hear him read the Scriptures in his own sweet, winning, and attractive manner. His voice, however, though it excels in expressing the tender, can give effect to the awful and terrible. Now his speech drops as the dew—now it thunders with majesty. Now he persuades, by the terrors of Sinai—now he allures, by the scenes of Calvary. Altogether, his preaching must be of great use in such a place as that where he at present labours. Not only will he do good among those

form a correct idea of the preacher, they must fancy a person of commanding figure standing before an audience with his hands lifted, while a stream of the most impassioned eloquence flows rapidly and sweetly, and rolls over with resistless energy, an entranced and enthusiastic audience. The countenance of the preacher beams and burns with earnestness and importunity, and the big tear, rolling down, gives testimony to the importance and magnitude of the message. We need not say that there is no sleeping—no listless auditors; every eye is fixed on the preacher, and many faces suffused with tears. The preacher himself is often melted into tears, and the effect is contagious. Often his entire audience is under the deepest impression—now they look on Him they have pierced, and mourn—now the children of Sion are joyful in their King. As an earnest preacher the subject of our sketch is the best model we know. There is nothing more disgusting than to see a clergyman attempting to work himself into fervour. In general, such utter small thoughts in inflated language, and attempt to feel, when their matter is only bad osteology. Such are generally most fierce when their discussion is most vapid and uninteresting. With the subject of our sketch it is entirely different. Soon as he reads his text, his whole soul is on fire. He speaks not to work himself into a preaching frame—he speaks because he feels, and feels intensely what he says. We defy the most perfect actor to feign the earnestness he displays. He is the earnestness of nature, which forbids imitation. Along with the fervour and fire of his diction, there is accuracy of both thought and style. His is not the thunders of the declaimer—his is logic on fire. He reasons, as well as speaks, fervidly. His are no commonplace thoughts—no antiquated dogmas—the thought is in admirable consonance with the manner. His views are thoroughly matured and often profound. The greatest thought is often expressed in a few very simple words. He evidently has the eye and the heart of a poet. Without employing lengthy figures, he illustrates his doctrines with indirect and beautiful analogies. He sees, in a strong light, the harmony of the universe—the connexion which obtains in all the various departments of the divine administration. Creation, Providence, and Redemption,

REV. JOSEPH BROWN,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DALKEITH.

IN no part of Glasgow does the Sabbath effect such an external change as in the High Street, with its various offshoots. During the week that street is not only one of the chief places of traffic, but it is the rendezvous of the idle and dissipated. Every second or third shop offers temptation to the dissipated, and its numerous lanes afford a shelter to the pests and plagues of society. On Sabbath, however, the traffic ceaseth. Even the Sabbath cab plague but slightly infects it. Instead of the idle and dissipated, the streets are thronged with well-dressed worshippers hastening to the various churches which were planted, many of them when the locality was more fashionable than it is at present. All along Blackfriars or East Regent street, at church hours, nothing is seen but one dense moving mass. Along that street pass many of the worshippers to St John's Church, to the churches in East Campbell street, and to the more numerous churches in East Regent street itself. Some of these churches have stood while more than one generation of worshippers have filled up the number of their Sabbaths, and been superseded by others. What associations are connected with the honoured place where the lamented Dr Heugh laboured so long and so successfully. That church accommodated one generation of worshippers, who, along with the venerable man who preached with such energy, now sleep in the dust, while their places are fully occupied with others. The walls, the windows, the pews, the pulpit, proclaim the vanity of life much more eloquently than the most impressive preacher. Who, on entering that place, can forbid the recollections of bygone days

compassing him on every side? Who can but think of the fathers and the mothers, and brothers and sisters—of the young men and old men who thronged to listen to the able and earnest instructions of him who is now gone along with them into another world. The sun that lighted them still shines—the air they breathed still visits the place—the pews and pulpit show few symptoms of decay, while the former occupants moulder into dust. But there are other more cheering recollections conjured up. One remembers more than the countenance that beamed and the tongue that was eloquent—he remembers the words of eternal life which were proclaimed. He thinks of that temple not made with hands which was so often discussed in language glowing and burning. He thinks of the labourer receiving his reward—of the victor wearing his crown. He thus finds recollections that cheer as well as dispirit him. Time and its trifles disappear—eternity and its realities burst on the view. These thoughts were suggested by a visit last Sabbath to the church of the late Dr Heugh. The last time the writer was in that place that holy man was discoursing, with all his eloquence, on the text, Come to me all ye who labour, and I will give you rest. Now he enjoys that rest in perfection, while others have entered on his labours.

At six minutes past eleven, Mr J. Brown of Dalkeith entered the pulpit of East Regent Street United Presbyterian Church, and at twenty minutes from twelve, Luke xii. 13–21 was announced as subject of discourse. The passage is the parable of the rich fool whose soul was required of him the night he had made his resolves how to conduct himself for years. The lecturer commenced in a very low voice, and went on to say that the Saviour did not encourage men to follow him for earthly good. Coming from heaven with a great and special mission to fulfil, he refused to act as a temporal judge or lawgiver. Not only does he, in the passage under consideration, disavow all connexion with the temporal affairs of the person who consulted him, but he also took advantage of the circumstance to expose the covetousness of men and their over-estimate of the things of time. The following ideas shall occupy our attention:—1st, The circumstance of the person whom the passage brings before us. 2d, His anxieties. 3d,

His projects. 4th, His errors. 5th, His doom. We cannot make room for the illustrations, excellent though they were.

The discourse was finished at half-past twelve, having occupied about 45 minutes. We may state that the discourse was very similar to one we heard the preacher deliver seven or eight years ago—on the treasure hid in the field—and we may therefore examine it more carefully as a fair specimen of the preacher's manner and style. The leading peculiarities of the discourse are plain and palpable. The outline is characterised by neatness and comprehensiveness. It includes all the chief ideas of the text, and, at the same time, avoids the common error of destroying the beauty of the parable by entering too much into detail, and allowing fancy to do the work of the judgment. Even Philip Henry's divisions on this parable are greatly inferior. They are more numerous, and probably more ingenious, but they are not so comprehensive nor so natural in their arrangement. The circumstances of the rich man were graphically portrayed—his anxieties were strikingly depicted—his purposes were ably revealed—his errors severely exposed and rebuked, and his doom touchingly pronounced. In other words, the first division dealt with the man's external circumstances—the next with the workings of his mind—the next with his errors, and the last with his relation with God as his judge. In illustrating these several divisions the preacher limited himself chiefly to plain statements. He seems to have an eye for the beauties of nature, and at the same time to observe the movements of society. He makes no attempt at formal argumentation, but contents himself with the descriptive. His preaching is sententious, as well as matter of fact. His style is terse and nervous, and he conveys much matter in few words. He makes no attempt at the profound or mysterious. His views are transparent and palpable. His preaching is particularly relished by the young, who hang on his lips with breathless attention. Of all the preachers we know he presents truth in its simplest form. The parables of our Lord he seems to have studied till he has become thoroughly imbued with their lessons. The symbol is strikingly represented, and its significance is clearly taught. The style of the preacher is in accordance with the clearness and simplicity of

his thought. It is neat, accurate, popular, and pleasing. He uses no hard words, and no involved sentences. His manner is lively and animated. His voice is soft, sweet, and musical, and he seldom raises it above its natural pitch. His ease and confidence must strike every auditor. Beyond almost every preacher he seems to be at home in the pulpit. He joins as heartily in the singing as though he had nothing else to do, and then rises to give out his text with such confidence, that one would suppose he had his discourse before him. He opens, however, a Bible without notes, and trusts to his memory alone. He is emphatically a ready speaker, and seldom requires to seek words to express his ideas. If at any time the language may not please him, he returns to the sentence without the least appearance of embarrassment, and places his ideas in words more appropriate.

Though he almost never seems in the least difficulty to express himself fluently and forcibly, we are not sure but preaching from notes would improve both his style and delivery. He is one of those who are quite aware they can preach without notes, and therefore uses none, but it is a question whether many of those would not preach still better were they to read their discourses. Even in his case there is some difficulty to follow exactly the train of thought he pursues, and there is a want of that flowing continuity in his style which carefully prepared notes would secure. Excellent as were the sententious sayings by which he illustrated the circumstances of the rich man, how eloquent must one of such a mind become when he writes out a description of a scene like that in the text. The facts, we grant, are the most important part, but did he place his facts in the flowing language of which he is master, his discourses would be thrilling and sublime. We observed that, in discussing the first particular, allusion was made once or twice to succeeding particulars. We say not this was a blemish, but we would greatly prefer to have the discussion of each particular as little involved with one another, as were the particulars themselves. The last particular—the doom of the rich fool—afforded fine scope for a powerful peroration. The whole five ideas may be viewed

as a climax, and the last gives a preacher an excellent opportunity of reaching the sublime. The rich fool dying *alone*, surrounded by full barns and unwept by friends, affords a theme sufficient to kindle fancy even in the dullest preacher. We make these suggestions because we know no preacher who makes the parables of our Lord more interesting to the young, and by adopting the plan recommended, we are satisfied that he could outvie almost any other preacher in impressive and chastened eloquence. His style at present is as near as may be a fac-simile of that of Mr Jay of Bath, one of the most successful preachers of his time. But to attempt to imitate such is folly. Bishop Hall is eloquent despite his terse, disjointed language—Jay of Bath is eloquent, partly because he has such a style, but probably these are the only two preachers who will in all time be popular despite the blemishes which characterise their language.

But while we think notes would tend to perfect the style of the subject of our sketch, it would seem that he has no great partiality for pulpit reading. His reading of the Scriptures is not unexceptionable. As far as enunciation, pronunciation, and even intonation, are concerned, his reading is almost perfect, but in emphasis and energy it is greatly deficient. He read a part of the 12th chapter of Luke, on the occasion in question, much too rapidly. Very little of the Scriptures admits of rapid reading, and least of all the words of Christ. The Psalms were beautifully, slowly, and emphatically read. In prayer, too, the changes from one subject to another were rapid, and in some cases unnatural. These, however, are but minor faults, and we should not have mentioned them, were we not confident that the preacher has only to will to avoid them, and they will disappear. We have long regarded Mr Brown as one of the best of preachers, and we are therefore anxious that he avoid whatever derogates from his acceptability.

Mr Brown is a native of Paisley, and several of his relatives occupy influential positions in our city and neighbourhood. After studying the usual term in the classics and theology, he was ordained in 1834. He has laboured fourteen years at

Dalkeith to a large and intelligent auditory. His views, ecclesiastical as well as theological, are liberal. He has used his influence to extend catholicity of views among the denomination to which he belongs. He is a stern disciple of total abstinence, and labours much to diffuse abstinence principles, and with great success.

In person he is tall and thin. His countenance is open and pleasant, betraying confidence, benevolence, and energy. He is much respected by Christians generally, and if spared, we predict for him high distinction as a preacher and philanthropist.

APRIL 22, 1848.

viewed as referring to the influences of heaven. We cannot command the clouds to rain nor the sun to shine. "Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles cause rain, or can the heavens themselves give showers." The seed and the soil are in our own hands. God does not put in the seed nor does he prepare the soil—he leaves that for us. There are influences, however—the influences of heaven—under his immediate control. In things spiritual, as well as temporal, there is so much in our own power. This we may illustrate by the case of the raising of Lazarus. Christ employed human instruments to roll away the stone, but then the quickening and resurrection of the dead body that was Christ's own act. Then he commanded them to take away the grave clothes and the napkin, as that could be done by the instrumentality of others. Thus there was something done by means, and something which could not be done with means. The soil and the seed are in our own power, but the blessing that descends—the dew from heaven—the rain from above—depend on God. There are two purposes for which rain is sent. There is, 1st, The softening of the ground; and, 2d, The springing of the seed. The ground is the better of being moistened by showers before it is ploughed, and hence it is said that the Lord maketh the earth soft with showers. Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. The ground must thus be ploughed up. So those who come to the house of God in a hard state are often softened—they come in a state of absolute stupidity, but whether in a state of nature or of grace it is time to break up the fallow ground—time to seek the Lord. Some have come to the house of God scores of years—hoary-headed men and women—but the fallow ground remains. Wo to you who laugh now, for ye shall weep and mourn. The text specially refers to asking this special influence. It refers to special seasons—to the ripening and maturing for the harvest. Some get the early rain who seem not to get the latter. In youth they are anxious and active; but in old age they are careless and worldly. Such have just enough to save the soul, but not enough to make itself manifest. Grace is needed at every stage of progress—grace to go down the valley, grace for the conflict with the last enemy. When the latter rain is given,

what a rich mellowed appearance is presented. I might dwell on what this latter rain is, but time will not permit. I pass on to another feature. There is the beginning and the ending—the sowing time and the reaping time. Some do not seek and do not get the latter rain, but there is the beginning and the ending. When we go into affliction without the former rain we will come out without getting good. There are special periods God's people need rain, and this congregation is dry and weary. But, lastly, we must notice the method of obtaining this rain. The petition or counsel in the text is, Ask now of the Lord; and the promise is, He will give rain. 1st. We must ask of the Lord. This is what God keeps in his own power. As we cannot command the rain, neither can we command the Spirit. The sending of the Spirit is the work of God. He thus advances his work in the soul. Ask of Jehovah—the work is his. But, 2dly, We should ask, because we cannot do without these influences. We cannot preach without the Spirit. We can do nothing savingly but by the Spirit. As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, &c. (see Isaiah lv. 10), so shall my word be. The rain comes at my command, so shall the Spirit. Thus grace is sovereign, and not at man's command. Ask ye the Lord. After the communion season ye need the latter rain. Oh, it was a precious season. The first rain is gone, but now you may have the latter rain. But, lastly, God has promised the latter rain. The Lord will make great or lightning clouds. This is the promise of God, and for all things will he be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. He will not give it to you or me without asking him for it. You must go, like Elijah's servant, seven times. You must expect from God. This congregation is parching and languid without the Spirit. Oh, that Christ crucified may be precious to you. Blessed are they who sow beside all waters. I do here sow—while I preach may showers of blessing descend.

The discourse was over at seven minutes to one, having occupied an hour and five minutes. After prayer, singing, and the benediction, the congregation was dismissed at one o'clock.

The discourse contained much that is true and much that

is profitable. The discourses of the subject of our sketch appear to great disadvantage without the living voice. The earnestness of the preacher lends the chief charm to his preaching. He generally leans over the Bible, and, fixing his eye, seemingly on some object a little to the right hand side of the church, he manifests great anxiety both by his voice and gesture. His style of address partakes largely of the colloquial. The preacher often speaks to his people as if engaged in conversation, in which both parties are deeply interested. Occasionally he uses the direct form of address and individualises his audience. His voice is particularly effective in expressing the tender and pathetic. He often, however, allows it to fall so as to be inaudible to strangers. His preaching is a confirmation of all that has been said of the effectiveness of earnest address. A discourse, which in other hands would command no attention, is heard with interest as delivered by him. The text on this occasion is highly figurative, and the introductory remarks of the preacher on the simplicity of Bible figures were just and striking. The Bible, he remarked, is the book of the poor, and its similies are drawn from subjects with which the most illiterate in all countries are familiar. But there was a feature of the figures of the Bible which we could have wished to have seen brought out in the discourse, and that is their definiteness. There are many of them, as the preacher stated, drawn from agriculture, but not two of them are similar. Each is introduced with a definite object, and an object peculiarly its own. The preacher seemed to assume that all the agricultural figures teach the same truth, and hence, instead of confining himself to the beautiful figure in the text, he discussed a good many others, and some of them at much greater length than the one in his text. Thus we had a lengthy exposition of the parable of the sower, and also frequent allusions to Hosea x. 12, "Till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Now we admit that all that was said of these was interesting and true, but it had no particular bearing on the illustration of the passage under review. Other passages occupied a good deal of time, and textual illustration was despatched in a very brief manner. The text is evidently connected with the close of the former chapter, and is designed

to show how intimately the corn and the wine there spoken of are dependant on the blessing of heaven. The goodness and the beauty of the Lord are stated in the preceding verse as the cause of the cheerfulness and happiness conferred on the youths spoken of, and as they are happy in the enjoyment of the corn and wine, the text directs their attention to the author of all temporal and spiritual blessing, who, while He commands the bright or lightening clouds—the high influences of heaven—is not only mindful of man, but of “every one grass of the field.” It needs no argument to prove that however beautiful the figures of Scripture are, they lose much of their beauty when their distinctive features are not brought out. No passage of the Bible brings out more strikingly the minuteness of the Divine care than the subject of discourse. He who causes the vapours to ascend—who balances the clouds, the lightning clouds—He who makes the clouds his chariots—has an eye “on every one grass of the field.” Thus the natural allusion is beautiful, and after stating that allusion abundant scope is afforded to illustrate the tenderness of God as the God of salvation. He who waters each grass of the field will not forget his redeemed family. The words of Christ are the best possible commentary on this passage—If God so clothe the grass of the field, how much more will he not clothe you, O ye of little faith! The method pursued by the preacher excluded these distinctive views of the text. Were one to preach only one discourse on the agricultural references of the Bible we say not but the plan of the preacher would have been the best, but when a preacher has to expound the Bible, Sabbath after Sabbath, such a course is apt to lead to sameness of matter. Let the parable of the sower be treated *per se*, and let every other figure supply its quota of suitable illustration. We do not mean to say that one passage of the Bible is not to be quoted as explanatory of another. Scripture is its own best interpreter, and it is by comparing spiritual things with spiritual that the true meaning of many passages is to be reached. It is not the quoting of parallel passages we wish to avoid—it is illustrating other passages which have no farther connexion with the text than that they, too, allude to a similar figure. We state this matter strongly, because young

preachers are generally fond of figurative texts, and in their illustration they frequently allow imagination to carry away their judgment. Instead of attempting to ascertain the original allusion of the text or the distinctive aspect of its figure, they seem to take their Concordance and turn up every passage of similar language, and then assume they all teach the same thing. There is a tradition that the Jews would not allow any one under thirty years of age to read the Song of Solomon; and it might perhaps be an equally judicious interdiction to let no preacher expound figures till he has subjected them to a severe analysis, and attempted to bring out their several beauties. The subject of our sketch, though he had a few scanty notes before him, seemed to make no reference to them. He is a ready speaker, and can speak without the aid of the eye. If aptness to speak and aptness to teach were the same thing, our preacher certainly requires no notes. Such a mind as his would, we are persuaded, vastly improve, did he subject it to severe and accurate thought. By careful preparation, instead of requiring two hours to go through the service, an hour and a half would be deemed sufficient. By confining himself strictly to the text, and by writing out his thoughts, a much more compact sermon would be produced. We are quite aware that such general discussion as the preacher pursued is highly relished, and may be very useful to a certain class of minds, but it does the preacher himself an injury. It is, however, but fair to mention that the subject of our sketch is both a popular and a useful preacher. He has gathered a large and attached congregation, and it is because we wish to see both his popularity and his usefulness increased that we have offered these strictures on his discourse.

In reference to the members of this congregation, it deserves honourable mention that, while some churches are formed partly under the influence of principle, but still more from party and personal quarrels, and often through some pique against their former minister, they left St James's at the bidding of principle alone. Instead of any quarrel with the minister, every one who left was ardently attached both to his person and ministry. They had to break asunder ties strengthened by time and the interchange of the holiest affec-

tions. They had to leave the place where they and their children had been baptised, and where they had enjoyed the highest intercourse permitted to man on earth. They had to interrupt the flow of relative, and, in some cases, of domestic endearment, in order to comply with His command whom they acknowledge as sole Lord of the conscience, and Supreme Head and Lawgiver of the Church.

Mr Brown has appeared before the public as an author. His work on the Millenium is spoken highly of as an able refutation of the Millennarian doctrines, but we speak only on report, as we have not seen it. We understand that formerly he held opposite views of this subject, and thus possesses an intimate acquaintance with both sides of the controversy.

Mr Brown is a native of Aberdeen, and was, after passing through the usual course of study, ordained as minister of Ord, in Banffshire, in 1836. Previous to that he was some time assistant to the Rev. Mr Jeffray, Dumbarton. In 1843, on the occasion of the Disruption, he joined the protestors, and then came to Glasgow in October of that year, where his ministrations have commanded a large share of popularity, and have been eminently useful. The beautiful place of worship, built by the enterprise of his people, is well filled, and the seats are fully let. The congregation, as our readers are aware, originated by a large number of the members and office-bearers of St James's leaving that church at the Disruption, and forming Free St James's.

APRIL 29, 1848.

REV. ALEXANDER FRASER,

NILE STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, GLASGOW.

A philosophical history of popular superstitions would prove that the greater part of them are founded on fact. Superstition is fact distorted—truth disjointed—nature or revelation misinterpreted. Our forefathers were ghost-seers, and who doubts the existence of spirits, though they are too ethereal to be seen by the eye of the flesh. They believed in supernatural premonitions, and their sons begin to perceive that there are causes and effects at work in the spiritual as well as in the natural world. They believed in sacred places and sacred persons, and though their sons differ from them in circumstances, they hold essentially the same belief. Comparatively few now believe that the repetition of a certain ceremonial over stone and lime will make one building more holy than another, but almost all believe that the erection set apart for religious worship, though not essentially, is officially, or relatively sacred. This feeling of sacredness attached to places is in no degree modified by the building itself. Man can look with contempt even on the hoary cathedral, when he knows that there religion has been made subservient to the basest of the passions—the stalking-horse of ambition and cupidity; while, on the other hand, even the turf erection, where the persecuted man of God lifted up his testimony, wears an aspect of sanctity and sacredness. Were the “caves and dens of the earth,” where the cloud of witnesses (Heb. xi.) wandered, and concealed themselves, now discovered, every one of them would be considered a Bethel, over which the invincible Shechinah still lingered. To this feeling of reverence for ground conse-

crated, not by ceremonials but by the genius of religion, the crusades and pilgrimages to the holy land are to be attributed. Those who contend loudest for the equality of all places—who in the depths of their philosophy acknowledge no enchanted ground, have, after all, their own particular *sanctum sanctorum*. Every man's house is more than his castle—it is, in a certain sense, the home of his sympathies—the refuge of his troubles—the solace of his cares. He may not speak of his own fire-side as possessing any particular attractions—he may even change his habitation without a regret expressed, but still he venerated the very walls and furniture, and his inmost feelings parted with them as from friends. In no case is this attachment to locality—this association with the physical, more ardent than to the place where our fathers worshipped. If that place has been corrupted by error or degraded by the secular, our attachment to it manifests itself in the way of regret. We heave the involuntary sigh, as we pass, if it has become the abode of error or the synagogue of Satan, and we feel as if we could violently dispossess the vile spirits who have intruded themselves into a place so sacred. On the other hand, if the spirituality and purity of worship have been maintained—if another generation of kindred spirits still make it their sanctuary, our best affections are drawn forth—our holiest aspirations ascend as we again take pleasure in its rubbish and stones, and favour its very dust. With such feelings as these do many visit the place where one of the fathers of Glasgow dissent long and successfully preached the word. Those whose memories are nearly half a century old remember the time when Greville Ewing, one of the most zealous and able ministers of the Church of Scotland left that communion, and became a hated Dissenter. At that time dissent, instead of being considered a merit, was held a sin, and in some cases the unpardonable sin. Dissent then had its reproaches and its persecutions, and it ought not to forget its early trials now that it is in the heyday of its prosperity. Among those who esteemed that reproach was the venerable Ewing, and he had the privilege of outliving the reproach and sharing the honours which, sooner or later, are the reward of principle. After labouring for a time, in the neighbourhood of Jamaica

Street, Nile Street Chapel was built for him, in 1810, by a willing people, and during many a year that building was crowded to suffocation with anxious and enthusiastic listeners. The dissenters of Glasgow need not to be told where Mr Ewing's chapel is. It is embalmed in their best recollections—it is cherished among their most sacred associations—it is enshrined as the sanctuary of freedom, as the house of God. Though time has curtailed its dimensions, and intruded some of its changes into its interior, it is still Mr Ewing's chapel. How short-sighted is man as regards the future. At the time that place was erected it was thought of only as a house of prayer. While it still honourably retains that best of names, it is now also become the memorial of him whose eloquence reared and filled it, and whose good name spread a savour around it more fragrant than the richest ointment. So indelibly did he inscribe his name on that house, that whatever changes may pass over it—however eminent the preacher who may occupy its pulpit, the name still remains. The present incumbent of that chapel is fully aware of the sacredness of the place he occupies. His highest wish is to preach the doctrines and imitate the example of him who went before him, and on whose labours he has entered. He knows that in the pews before him there sit those who were entranced with the eloquence, and were melted with the sympathies, and were commanded by the reasoning, and influenced by the life of his venerable predecessor. Nor does he ungracefully walk in his steps. It is probably the best possible proof of his efficiency that he can edify and please the disciples of so great a Master in Israel.

Last Sabbath at eleven o'clock he commenced his usual public services. After singing, during which the people stand, he read a chapter in Job, and then engaged in prayer with much propriety. After singing again, Luke ii. 21 to end was read, at 25 minutes to 12, as the subject of lecture. The preacher commenced by remarking that the early days of Christ's humanity were distinguished, on the one hand, by marks of abasement, and by indications of greatness and glory on the other. He was born, not in a palace, but in a stable, and attended, not by nobles, but by the poor. While an

angel proclaimed his birth, the offering presented by his mother was that accepted only from the poorest of the people. Simeon, however, bore testimony to his Messiahship, and Magi, guided by a star created for the purpose, or rendered visible at that time, presented a token of their homage. This visit, but for the warning of God, might have been fatal, for Herod sent forth and slew all the children under two years of age. Hence the beautiful poetical creation which represents Rachel starting from her grave and weeping for her children because they are not. Hail, ye first flowers of evangelical Christianity! Our space excludes the resolve, which was a popular exposition of the passage.

The lecture was over at 25 minutes past 12 o'clock, having occupied 50 minutes. After praise, prayer, and the benediction, the congregation was dismissed at 25 minutes to one.

In the afternoon, after introductory services similar to those of the forenoon, he gave out for his text, John i. 29, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The service was similar in length to that of the forenoon, and we may mention that we found in this a good illustration of a theory we have often stated, namely, that when a preacher carefully prepares for the pulpit, he has every chance of preaching short sermons, and of getting through the service in time, so as not to interfere with other duties. The greatest sermon devourer can scarcely say the above discourses were too short. Fifty minutes each time, or one hundred minutes preaching at the two meetings, will supply the best memory. Though the preacher scarcely exceeded one hour and a half with each of the entire services, there was no appearance of haste. He read leisurely—he prayed devoutly—he preached deliberately, and yet he was done in time to allow his people nearly an hour and a half between services. We cannot find terms strong enough to express our views of chronological propriety. Ministers generally seem to have been miserably supplied with the organ of time and order. Many of them seem to think they will succeed with men as certain people of old thought they would succeed with God—by their much speaking, and hence vain repetition—interminable tautology—inextricable confusion, are the result. In opposition to these,

the subject of our sketch seems not only to have the organ of time, but the organ of conscientiousness. He satisfies himself with the proper hours of worship, and religiously avoids trenching on the time allotted for private and domestic duty. Nor is this strict adherence to "clerical hours" at all mysterious—it is the effect of a cause, and that cause is careful preparation. He has not to ransack the whole psalm and hymn book in quest of the subject of praise—the lines are previously fixed—nor has he to pray himself into what is generally called a praying frame—he enters the pulpit in that frame. Nor has he to seek a text after he is in the pulpit—(a feat of which some are particularly fond of boasting) both the text and the sermon have been matter of a week's consideration and a week's research. Nor does he leave the length of the sermon to the kind of preaching state into which he may happen to find himself. He has determined the illustrations as well as the text; and though he does not confine himself strictly to previous preparation, he takes care in no case to allow himself to trespass on his people's patience.

The subject of our remarks not only prepares carefully, but he prepares successfully. His discourses are replete with thought. Every sentence contains a sentiment, and hence his discourses are pre-eminently didactic. He compresses into small space a great amount of important matter. Indeed, we are not sure but he carries condensation to an undue length. We have frequently mentioned the Chalmerian school—or school of one idea—as one of the most successful as regards preaching. The subject matter, or substratum, is a single or simple fact, or principle or doctrine, which is subjected to multifarious illustration, so that the fact or principle is made patent and palpable to all; but the preaching of Mr Fraser is the reverse of this. Facts and principles are plenteous, while illustration is brief, and in some cases meagre. Occasionally in his lecture he gave us a sentence or two of the descriptive, but in general he confined himself to the didactic. The subject, however, is one where description would tell effectually. The child Jesus travelling with his parents—sitting in the midst of the doctors—at the feast of the passover—inquired for among kinsfolk and acquaintance—dwelling at Nazareth—increasing

in stature and wisdom, and subject to his parents—are themes sufficient to kindle imagination.

Our preacher possesses a mind remarkable for its clearness and accuracy. He deals not in the hap-hazard and conjectural. What he speaks he must know, and know completely. Some may take a more comprehensive or a more profound view of a subject, but none can see it more clearly. The distant his vision may not reach, but the near he sees in all its bearings and aspects. Hence there is no mysticism, no abstruseness about his preaching, and no inconsistency in his theology. His judgment is accurate and clear. He compares and reasons with fairness and fidelity. After stating different views held by different parties, he weighs the whole case, and generally so decides as to carry the convictions of his hearers along with him. A mind so clear and so well balanced, instinctively avoids extreme views. It is much inclined to discuss all such on the *a priori* principle. Truth is the least imposing thing in the universe. Instead of standing forth as anomalous among the works of God, it is the image or rather the reflection of these—and hence whatever is strange has a *prima facie* case against it. Error is strange. It is a violation of nature, of reason, of every law; and though it may continue partly to clothe itself in the garb of truth, its unnatural form may still be discovered. On some such principle the subject of our sketch disposes of those novelties which for a time amuse and astonish the ill informed. The astronomer looks on the passing comet as it blazes in its erratic journey, but it is in examining the less imposing phenomena of the heavens he finds his chief delight. He sees much more beauty in a fixed than in a wandering star. So with those of well-balanced minds. The comets which shoot across the theological horizon may do very well to look at, but it is in the more stable “ordinances of heaven” that he finds his delight.

The manner of our preacher is in accordance with his matter—chaste and accurate. He reads the Scriptures well, and his prayers are the outflowings of a mind conversant with itself, and deeply imbued with the spirit of the Bible. His prayers, like his preaching, are comparatively short. He

expresses himself briefly and orderly, and avoids all seeming repetition.

Mr Fraser is a native of the parish of Campsie. He was a member of the church in Nile Street, Glasgow, when he commenced his studies with a view to his engaging in the Christian ministry. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church assembling in Albany Street Chapel, Edinburgh, in April 1837, and removed to Colchester in 1843. He became pastor of the church to which he now ministers about fifteen months ago. At the anniversary of his first year his people presented him with a very handsome testimonial, consisting of a gold watch and appendages.

MAY 6, 1848.

REV. WILLIAM ARNOT,

FREE ST PETER'S, GLASGOW.

It is not a little remarkable, that, though man, for the last six thousand years, has been prying into the future, he is, at this day, as little of a prophet as when he made his first attempts. Even the phenomena whose phases vary but comparatively little baffle his powers of induction and inference. There seems to be something in human nature opposed to external appearances. Man, though facts have a thousand times falsified all his preconceptions, still clings to his ideas, and will have certain external indications the index of corresponding mental qualities. Introduce the man who plumes himself on his knowledge of men into the presence of a group of juveniles, and demand him to read in the countenances before him the future history of each, and, in nine cases out of ten, he will be mistaken. That sprightly, active boy is deemed one of great promise; that modest and thoughtful-looking juvenile will be a philosopher; and that dull, rough exterior indicates nothing at all. A few years afterwards, grant our judge of phenomena another interview with these youths, as they have met to enter on a course of study in one of our colleges. Time has enlarged their proportions and altered their appearance. One of them is now loquacious and dictatorial, another is sarcastic and witty, and another hears all and says nothing. This last envies his more showy fellow-students, and despairs of ever reaching the high excellence to which they hasten. The prophetic man is of the same mind, and scarcely deigns to notice the youth who in his own sight, and in his, is a very unpromising subject. Time, however, works wondrous changes

The loquacious, and sarcastic, and showy, begin to find their level, and their dull companion can translate his Horace and Homer, and solve his problem as well as they. They have now reached that point when juvenile talent is of more avail than juvenile politeness or gentlemanly bearing. They have come in contact with mind, and mind alone can secure superiority. When they leave college, the showy gentlemen are shorn considerably of their conceit, and the dull juvenile has at length discovered that, after all, he is not so very far behind as he supposed. He may not shine so much at a tea-party; he may not be so ready in communicating his thoughts; he may not mix so much with society; but he communes with his own heart and with books. He considers his time too precious to waste in profitless company, and he devotes it to study and thought. A few more years roll on, and the tables turn. The showy students have retired to silence, and the unpromising one begins to make himself heard and felt. All have been licensed, and all ordained preachers of the gospel, and each has a congregation, but only one is able to make a lasting impression. The others can please and delight their audiences, but one can take his pen and give his thoughts to the church and to the world. The others have reached their mental maturity, but this one waxes stronger and stronger. Those communicate to their auditors the thoughts of others; this his own thoughts. Those command the affections of an attached people by the faithful discharge of official duties; this excites the attention of thousands by the force of his genius and by the originality of his views.

Some of our readers will associate the clergyman whose name heads this sketch, and some of his contemporaries, with the above delineation. His earlier days were unfavourable to those personal accomplishments which are valued by many at a very high rate. His training necessarily placed him at a discount when brought into competition with those who were cradled in luxury and nursed in refinement. The shrewdest observer of his early days never dreamed of the real character of the future man, and his classmates stood in no fear of a prospective eclipse. Though he could learn his lessons as well as the best of them, there was that uncouth manner and that

rough exterior under which real genius can so easily conceal itself from short-sighted man. Yet so it happened, that when many of his fellow-students who were wont to patronise or pity him had reached their not very ambitious altitude—when the world knew all it had to hope or to fear from them, the subject of our sketch only begins to show his strength and promises to reach as far above them, in real talent and usefulness, as he appeared their inferior in juvenile accomplishments. Be it observed, however, that he still retains the peculiar external traits of his boyhood. Like every man of real native genius, he despises the little winning arts of the fine gentleman. His external is not very materially changed; his voice is not much more musical; his enunciation is not much sweeter; and his manner is not a great deal more attractive; but while he retains his personal identity uncorrupted, he has given indications that a mind of no ordinary mould has chosen to make that somewhat uninviting external its habitation, and that the fascinations of genius throw minor drawbacks into utter oblivion. By writing an anonymous life of one of kindred mind—the late eminently gifted Mr Halley—he excited very general curiosity as to the author; and when the second edition revealed the secret, the former companions of the subject of our sketch began to understand something of the mental character of their former associate. Since then the press has circulated his thoughts, and all competent judges who have perused them have assigned their author a place amongst those orbs destined to shine with dazzling splendour in the theological firmament. We have said “*orbs*,” but, probably, *comets* had been the more appropriate symbol. Theological stars there are who shine with a steady and growing splendour, but it is yet a question whether some of the properties of the comet will not be developed in the career of the minister of St Peter’s. Genius always pursues untrodden paths; and as the subject of our sketch does unquestionably possess genius, his path, we may predict, will be somewhat peculiar. Genius demands latitude to its movements. It gives birth to the new and often to the strange. It excites sudden surprise and awakens peculiar anticipations. Let any one read the sermon of the subject of our sketch on John xix. 18—

"Jesus in the midst"—the sermon will be found in the "Free Church Pulpit"—and they will find a verification of our remarks. That discourse is strikingly original, and, in some parts, abundantly fanciful. The reader finds he is in company with a daring and adventurous guide, and yet he has few fears of being misled. He finds he is proceeding in untrodden paths, but still he feels secure—though occasionally anxious. The star that guides the way appears at times the fitful meteor flashing across the sky, but still its light cheers the gloomiest valleys and guides safely to the heaven of heavens. Jesus is still seen, and seen in his glory, but on either side fancy mixes with fact. The picture is true and beautiful, but the back ground is singularly filled up. The traveller never wearies with such a guide. He may occasionally be startled—he must be often delighted—he will be always edified. The congregation who have the felicity to enjoy his ministrations will best understand the force of these remarks. They now have followed him so long that they have implicit confidence in his guidance. A stranger may be occasionally somewhat inclined to doubt, but his own people, who know the way he takes, feel no uneasiness as he expresses truth in his own singular manner. They have found delight and repose in following him as he guides them into truth, and what appears unusual to others never strikes them as strange. Let it not be supposed that he teaches any new or strange doctrine—the novelty is in the manner, not in the matter—in the illustration rather than in the substratum.

From what we have said our readers will perceive that we consider the minister of St. Peter's possessed of real native genius. Whether he is entitled to lay claim to the higher order of genius—creative genius—may be a question, but that he possesses illustrative genius of the very highest class, we have no hesitation in affirming. Many minds are so feeble that ideas pass through them without receiving any impress. They enter the mind as Howe's, or Baxter's, or Fuller's, and they leave it as exclusively theirs. On the other hand, while the subject of our sketch industriously collects facts from the book of creation and the book of revelation—from men and from things—they are all cast into his own mould, and are laid

before his audience, bearing distinctly the image and superscription of the speaker. The mould into which he throws them is marked rather than refined. The polished ideas which he picks up are thrown forth in a much less elegant, but more imposing form. While many rub down the strong thoughts of a powerful writer, they receive from him additional force. The diluted he condenses—the feeble he strengthens. He deals much more in quarrying than in polishing. Soon as he gets a stone detached from the rock he places it in the building, and the rougher it is it serves his purpose the better. He builds strongly rather than finely, and erects an edifice massive and enduring. The changes of time which affect the polished temple leaves the rugged erection undecayed and the ever changing state of society and of taste renders fine writing obsolete, while that which contains the sinews of thought will survive throughout all time. What can time do to such thoughts as the following—(which we extract from one of his published discourses) unless to render them more venerable—“Jesus is set the central sun of this and all other worlds, and though multitudes of the fallen so hide in the dust of the earth that they are not enlightened by his beams, they cannot break the bond by which they are kept revolving round him. They are dragged unconscious after his chariot wheels, and made the monuments of his power and glory.—Though a fallen world keeps out the melting rays from its icy bosom it cannot break loose from its centre.” Speaking of the crucifixion between the two thieves, he says, “The light of this sun, more soft and more winning now in the hour of his going down, streamed forth on all around. The deep sighing in the spirit of the man Christ Jesus fell alike on the ears of both the dying men. One of them yielded to the power of his love—melted under his love, and gave in his submission—“Lord, remember me.” The other kept tempting Christ instead of trusting him. The man who would speculate about Christ’s power instead of accepting Christ’s offer continued his doubting until his lingering spirit left the tortured body and passed into darkness. Jesus did not take that place to be tried but to be trusted.” We might quote others, but the above, which are specimens, will live—the world in none of its phases, nor the

church in its lowest moods, will ever let these thoughts die. But besides this individuality which marks his thoughts, there is also an occasional quaintness. Thus he says, "Follow the path of the Sun of Righteousness, circling through the sphere of redemption, and mark that he is all glorious and glorious always." In proving that Jesus is always in the midst he says, "When in Gethsemane on the one side stood angels bright, and burning flames of fire, Jehovah's messengers, and on the other lay wearied men asleep, alike unable—angels and men—unable to make the cup of wrath pass from his lips—there was Jesus in the midst treading the wine press alone with garments rolled in blood." Speaking of the way men delay accepting of mercy he says—"While he holds fast his portion and keeps his eye fixed on earth he would hold parley with the Saviour of sinners. He would stipulate, and try, and make terms. While he carries on this blind, stupid bargaining he has a sacred determination that should matters take a serious turn he will close with Christ ere he die. This is the devil's cunning suggestion to keep man at ease in his bargaining." This quaint method of stating truth is, after all, but a slight departure from the path that those walk who cannot strike out a way for themselves. It is the natural manifestation of a vigorous and daring mind.

As connected with this it may be mentioned that all such minds must be independent. It is not to be inferred, however, that this class of mind finds it indispensable to abandon truths generally believed. Such, while they yield unintelligently to no authority, generally know what use to make of it. An idea is not the worse, but all the better, that it is held by good and shrewd men. It is more in the details than in the substratum of theology that this independence is manifested. They do not consider it necessary to state truth in stereotyped phrase. They are so intimate with truth, that without fear of maiming it they can throw it into new and attractive forms. Thus, instead of admonishing believers, in common phrase, to keep their eye on Christ and follow him as they go through the world, he says, "What emotions possess you while your eyes are uplifted to trace the path of the Sun of Righteousness breaking forth at first through the morning twilight of primeval

promise, and shining more and more unto the perfect day. What emotions possess you, ye pilgrims on earth, as ye trace the footsteps of his glorious marchings through this waste wilderness, bearing all his redeemed church?"

On Sabbath last, shortly after eleven, he entered his pulpit in Free St Peter's Church, and after going through the usual introductory services, he preached from Matt. vii. 13-23 verses. The forenoon services were terminated about half-past twelve o'clock. In the afternoon Mr Arnot preached from John's Gospel, 8th chapter and 31st and 32d verses. He dismissed the congregation about a quarter to four.

Mr Arnot's pulpit success can be indebted to nothing but to the originality of his mind, his bold, yet correct, ideas, and vigorous style of language. When he commences, the monotonous and thoroughly *unaffected* tones—the words lazily following each other at equal distances without any visible motion of the frame, except the lips and a convulsive movement of the hand—sorely try the patience of the listener, and fairly induce him to wish he was anywhere else. But as he proceeds the hearer gradually forgets all about disappointment. As the preacher warms the words flows with increased rapidity—the massive frame labours with ill-suppressed emotion—the tones are pitched in a higher key, and ideas startling and powerful are every moment presented. He is remarkable by the absence of much that other preachers possess, more remarkable by the possession of much they lack. In masculine understanding, in unmistakeable earnestness—a heart in his work—Mr Arnot has no superior.

The congregation of St Peter's is large, and includes a number of the young men of the city, who show their ability to appreciate profitable instruction by attending there. Mr Arnot is a native of Perth, and was, in early days, brought up to manual labour. He was, however, induced to enter upon a student's life, and, after creditably going through both the classical and divinity classes, he was for a short time assistant to the Rev. Mr Bonart of Larbert and Dunipace, and was ordained minister of St Peter's Church, in January, 1838. At the disruption, he, along with his people, left the Establishment, and, as yet, they have retained their former place of

worship, which was built on the church extension scheme. Some attempts have been made to remove him from his people. About two years ago he was offered a professorship in an English College, but declined acceptance. He is much esteemed by Christians of all denominations, and his claims as one of strong, and vigorous, and original mind, are generally acknowledged, as he is utterly free of all affectation and pretension.

[Since the above was written the congregation, along with others, have been deprived of their place of worship by a decision of the House of Lords.—ED.]

MAY 20, 1848.

REV. S. T. PORTER,

WEST GEORGE STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, GLASGOW.

THOUGH moral truth cannot boast of the definiteness of the certain sciences, there are some particulars in which it bears to them a strong resemblance. The elements of both are so exceedingly simple that a child can understand them. The magnificent system of geometry is based on a few axioms so obviously true as to defy mistake or dispute; and the still more magnificent system of redemption, with its adjuncts, is based on a few facts, intelligible, unmistakeable, and impressive. Though we would not call a man a mathematician who knows that a whole is greater than its part, and that things equal to the same thing are equal to one another, it is difficult to determine how much of moral truth is essential to entitle one to the appellation of Christian. The scheme of human redemption has been adapted to the capacities of all, and, consequently, the man never able to get beyond the first principles may know all that, in his case, is necessary to constitute the highest style of man—a Christian. The man but a few removes from idiocy has understood the saying, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and has rejoiced in his Saviour. The man to whom much of the Bible is dark and meaningless—who knows as much of the symbolical as he knows of the differential calculus—as much of the moral universe as he does of the harmony of the spheres—has known the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and thus possessed life eternal. In some cases, however, the truth reaches man in the lowest depth of moral degradation, and at its omnipotent touch the fallen rise and take their place in the

ranks of intelligent and active manhood, and hence, though the entrance of truth gives life, first principles make way for other and higher discoveries. The minister of Christianity, whose mind can only embrace the rudimental facts, may be instrumental in turning many to righteousness; but it is desirable that in addition to the first principles he should "be able to go on to perfection." The truth, besides securing objective blessing, has a great subjective work to perform in all who receive it. It expands as well as refines and elevates the mind. Under proper training the Christian feels his intellectual as well as his spiritual strength increase, till with "all saints he is able to comprehend what is the length and breadth, the height and depth of that love which passeth knowledge." While the congregation that enjoys the ministrations of a man of God, however feeble his mind, and however slender his accomplishments, has abundant reason for gratitude, the people who, in addition to having the form of sound words communicated, is thrilled with the force of genius, and led on from strength to strength, is in a much more enviable state. The preacher of feeble mind reduces his audience to mental imbecility, while the preacher of intelligence and energy communicates to his hearers his own attributes. Under the ministrations of the man of real mind have our philosophers, legislators, philanthropists, and missionaries been reared. The readiest way, to quench the flickering sparks of intellect, is to submit them to the outpourings of dulness, while the surest way to fan them into a flame is to bring them under the action of etherial genius. For reasons we need not stop to enumerate, the higher parts of the Christian system find but comparatively few expounders. While Christianity creates and moves the intelligence of the world, many of the best minds it awakens and stimulates, devote their energies to other pursuits than its illustration. Still here and there may be found minds of the higher class employing all their powers, and consecrating all their endeavours to reveal to men the unsearchable riches of Christ, and among these we have no hesitation in assigning the subject of our sketch a prominent place. To the noblest of work he has brought to bear with admirable effect the powers of an intellect of a high order, and the sympathies of a

heart purified by the truth. The Englishmen who have hitherto occupied our Scottish pulpits, were not generally well calculated to prepossess us in their favour. Scotchmen, partly from vanity, and partly from fact, claim superiority as regards shrewdness and force of intellect over their southern neighbours, but occasionally our pride is sadly wounded, and our facts somewhat staggered, as an intellectual orb crosses the Tweed and lights up our northern sky with scintillations pure and brilliant. Partaking of the vanity of our nation, we went to see this southern luminary, doubting much whether there was cause for all the gazing and wondering we had heard of, and though we were most firmly persuaded that after all he might be a mere *ignis fatuus*, we were compelled to sacrifice our pleasing prejudice, and to admit that for once, at least, Scotchmen had found their match. No *ignis fatuus*—no glaring meteor is he, but like the sun going forth in his might, he scatters around him a flood of glory, and hastens to meridian splendour. Dropping figure, we may state at once that Mr Porter is as near as may be, a piece of pure intellect, animated with a spirit of fervent love. Those who know anything of physiognomy are struck with his appearance, even when he is inactive. During singing he sits with a firmness and a composure which only a man of mind can possess. That compact frame—that lofty brow—that pleasant countenance—are all the true symbols of the spirit within. When such a mind, as that of the subject of our sketch, happens to be housed in a feeble or disproportioned body, restlessness is the result. The body is unable to endure the burden of the spirit; but in this instance the frame work seems to have been very compactly built, in order to correspond with the invisible motive power. The spirit may work mightily, but the frame is unshaken, save occasionally the trembling of the voice under the burden of thought and feeling. The mighty spirit, placed in a less compact body, soon tears and wears it out; but in this case the balance of the physical and intellectual has been preserved, and the spirit for long years may make it its servant.

His sermon of last evening was a complete masterpiece, alike unobjectionable in its theology, its arguments, its arrangement, and its rhetoric. The text was Luke x. 11—"Not-

withstanding, be ye sure of this that the kingdom of God is come nigh to you." After a lucid introduction, in which the circumstances connected with the words of the text were beautifully pointed out, and in which he showed that the words were meant in mercy rather than in judgment, he proceeded to state what the kingdom of God in the text was. He showed that the kingdom was God's dealings with every man as a separate individual—that it relates to the first springs of action—that it is the dispensation under which God shows forth all his glory, and that it is his final dispensation. The illustrations under each of these were exceedingly striking, original, and beautiful. He then proceeded to show, in the second place, that the kingdom is indeed what it declares itself to be—the kingdom of God. That it was of God, he urged, first, because man cannot otherwise account for the existence of the gospel; and, second, man's consciousness of his individual injustice in this matter is the best of proof. In illustrating these, he very ingeniously and effectively challenged the objector to account for the existence of the gospel. If not of God, whence is it? He was also extremely happy in showing that men's opposition to the gospel was exceedingly unjust, inasmuch as that gospel creates none of the facts which stand against the sinner. Remove the gospel and they still remain. He then summed up by first recommending men to retract what evil they had done against God's kingdom, as the text implies the patience and long-suffering of God, and then he reminded his auditors that their past treatment of the gospel had been noticed and condemned. The whole discourse, which lasted an hour and a quarter, was a torrent of chaste, vigorous, and burning eloquence. In illustrating, for instance, the kingdom as the last dispensation, his description of the kingdom on earth merging in the kingdom of heaven, was sublime. Those who never heard the preacher may be told that, in delivering his discourse, he stands erect, with one hand generally in his bosom, and the other moving gently above the Bible. With no other motion but that of his right hand, and with no great variety of voice, and with no artificial or antithetical sentences, he keeps his audience an hour in breathless suspense, as he points out rapidly, energetically, and unhesitatingly, the

treasures of a richly-furnished mind. What is still more remarkable, he reads closely from his manuscript, but with such fluency and fervour that no one wishes it otherwise, and throughout a long discourse not once does he stumble or show the slightest embarrassment. The intelligent auditor, in listening to him, feels that he is under the *power of mind*. We recollect a traveller mentioning that a large steamer in motion gave him the best idea of mechanical and physical power. Whether others felt sympathetically we know not, but certainly we never had a better idea of mental power than that conveyed by the evening discourse. While the rudiments of Christianity were not overlooked, it was presented in its most commanding aspects. The God who made the heavens was brought near to every man in his power and love—the silent but omnipotent power of the word of the kingdom was revealed—the harmony of redemption with the moral attributes of God was rendered visible—the earth was elevated to its true position as the platform of redemption, while the kingdom of God, after filling the earth, merged into the kingdom above, completing the bliss of a peaceful and changeless eternity.

Besides describing graphically, he reasons admirably. The semi-infidelity which, under a powerless ministry, occasionally raises its feeble menaces against the gospel is silent and contemptible in his presence. Those who think in their wisdom that the ministrations of the kingdom have been committed to men of humble talent and acquirement, when they come in contact with this preacher, appear small in their own sight. They find the gospel is not the fable they fancied it, and as it appeared as stated by the disciple of some theological school, but that it is a system worthy of thought, and marked with the impress of divinity. To our youth such preaching is invaluable. The absurd notions gathered by them of the ministrations of the sanctuary are speedily dissipated when they hear truth in its stern majesty, and delivered from all the mazes of ignorant or designing ecclesiastics.

As we have already hinted, his popularity owes but little to his manner. That manner is dignified and grave almost to a fault. He speaks distinctly and earnestly, but he knows nothing of the declamatory or violent. He avoids all extravagance

of thought and gesture, and places his thoughts before his hearers in language simple, inartificial, and severely chaste. His prayers are practical and entirely void of form. There is much genuine feeling and pathos in them. They are general rather than particular or personal, and sometimes they contain striking thought. Thus, for instance, he said last Sabbath, "Thou hast often made the world appear dead to us and us to the world;" and again he said, "May the ear when it hears us bless us, and may the eye when it sees us turn in gratitude to God on our account." Thus he applies some striking passages of Scripture in what to many will appear a new form. His appearance is humble and devout. There is no flippancy and no affectation in his speech or behaviour. He is, what we should suppose to be, fully furnished for his work.

Mr Porter, personally, is about the middle size and habit. He is the beau ideal of a personable clergyman. His brow is well formed, and lofty, and his countenance highly intellectual. His eyes are keen and penetrating, and his mouth is small. In private life he is communicative and gentle, duly respecting the opinions of others, while he intelligently holds and defends his own.

The Rev. Mr Porter is a native of London, and has been a clergyman about fourteen years. During eleven or twelve years he laboured at Darwin, Lancashire, with great success. His congregation there lately built a chapel at an expense of five thousand pounds. Dr Wardlaw's church have presented him with a unanimous and urgent call to become their pastor.

MAY 27, 1848.

[Since the above was written, Mr Porter has accepted the above call from George Street Congregational Church to be co-pastor with Dr Wardlaw, and has laboured for some time with much acceptance.—ED.]

REV. N. PATERSON, D.D.,

FREE ST ANDREW'S, GLASGOW.

As the minister of Christianity is engaged in the noblest work so also is he furnished with the best possible facilities. The Bible, which is his text-book, besides supplying him with the facts of his ministry, scatter around him the richest illustrations. The peculiar doctrines of the faith he inculcates being emanations from the mind that planned the worlds—that garnished the heavens and plenished earth—the things which are seen are, in consistency with the harmony of the universe, made the symbols of the spiritual and eternal. Revelation clearly shows, in its every page, that the Author of creation is also the Author of redemption. Knowing from the beginning that the stewards of his mysteries would belong to men of all varieties of mind, the Author of the Bible so framed it that it would be equally suitable as the text-book of the learned and of the unlearned—of the man whose sympathies with nature would beat in unison with the moral world, and of the man who had no eye for the fair things with which the dwelling-place of man teems. The great cardinal doctrines of the Bible are Jesus Christ and him crucified, and the man who may remain deaf to the harmonies of nature may hear the voice of mercy and rest in His love who invites the weary and heavy laden to his heart and heaven. But though the man by whom the beauties of nature are unseen, and to whom creation and providence unfold their fulness and their loveliness in vain, may believe to the saving of his soul, and even be instrumental in turning

many to righteousness—the limitation of his knowledge must greatly limit his joy. Though he who increaseth merely secular knowledge increaseth sorrow, he who increaseth spiritual knowledge increaseth joy. The teacher who knows nothing but the primary facts of Christianity may guide his people safely to the haven of eternal rest, but it is the preacher who has an eye for the beauties and sublimities of nature who will be completely furnished for his work, and who will be instrumental in communicating to his hearers the fulness of joy which springs from a full view of the unity, and harmony, and beauty of all the departments of the works of God. To the Christian teacher of talent and taste we know no home to be compared with the rural manse surrounded with the manse garden. He finds there more than leisure and retirement—more than the quietude of nature—more than his study and his books. There he finds the great Teacher himself, as it were in his garden, communicating his tender and touching lessons to the intelligent and spiritual listener. What place for the man of God like the garden, where nature has concentrated its loveliness and redemption its facts! In its most palpable aspects it recalls the fall of man in the garden of Eden and the work of Christ, part of which was accomplished, in the garden of Gethsemane. It suggests the paradise of God, where the tree of life flourishes in perennial greenness, and whose leaves afford shelter, health, and repose to the nations of the saved. But besides the more palpable associations of the manse garden, it speaks with a thousand voices in the ear open to instruction. There may be those whose eye and whose ear are so untrained and untuned that they remain unmelted and unmoved amid its beauties, but there are also those on whom the full flow of beauty gushes, and on whom the loveliness and sublimities of nature press with ineffable significance. What an effect must it have on the teacher of righteousness, after being with God in the duties of the family, when he walks out and meets that same God in the blush of every flower and in the fragrance of every rose! When the fulness and freshness of the morning perfumes speak to him of the “beauty of God”—when the gentle breathings of heaven among the trees echo the voice of God, and when the dew on the grass is the emblem of the

droppings of the Spirit of Christ ! How different must be the ministrations of such a clergyman from one who hears only the wind and smells only the flower—who perceives no utility in the richness of the productions around him unless to please the external ear and eye or to promote physical health. Such may present to their people an unexceptionable exterior—the indication of high physical health—such may even speak to the understanding and conscience of the work accomplished at Jerusalem ; but compare not their ministrations to his who has come from his garden overpowered with the loveliness of nature, and melted with the tenderness of the manifestations of the God of nature and of grace. To the former the numerous allusions to the grass, and flowers, and lilies, and fields and trees are utterly meaningless, to the latter they all speak of the kindness and love of Him who sendeth rain to every grass of the field and clothes the lilies in gayer attire than that of Solomon. These thoughts were suggested last Sabbath as we went to hear the author of the *Manse Garden* preach, and we are sure similar thoughts must often occur to the intelligent members of the congregation of Free St Andrew's as they think of the former home and work of their esteemed minister. The person who can read the *Manse Garden* without having the fountains of feeling unsealed must be of a very different temperament from the author of the *Manse Garden*. That work shows very clearly that its author has a keen eye to the fair things and the lovely of the rural home of a clergyman, and that by him the harmonies of the universe are impressively perceived. A short view of the work of last Sabbath will satisfy the intelligent reader that the author of the *Manse Garden* makes his extensive knowledge and keen perception to bear with effect on his pulpit ministrations, and that a taste for the beauties of nature enhances the value of Christian instruction to an incalculable extent.

At about five minutes past eleven he commenced his usual Sabbath work. After singing and prayer he read part of a chapter and made cursory remarks on it as he proceeded. After the second singing he gave out, as the subject of his lecture, at a quarter to twelve, Numbers xiii. 26, to the end. (The verses contain the report of the spies sent to examine

Canaan.) Our space cannot admit even an outline of the lecture, which was finished at twenty-five minutes past twelve, having occupied about forty minutes. After the concluding services the congregation was dismissed at twenty minutes to one. In the afternoon he entered his pulpit exactly at two o'clock, and after praise and prayer, being about to awaken the sympathies of his congregation to the claims of the Sustentation Fund, for which a collection was to be made the following Sabbath, he read the ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians, which was appropriate for the occasion, intermixing occasionally graphic explanations. After again singing, he preached on Luke viii. 3, last clause.

As an expositor of scripture the subject of our sketch greatly excels. Much that is called lecturing is imaginative and superficial talking. Lecturers often make a passage the basis of remark rather than the subject of analysis. The historical in their hands has little or no meaning, and the Bible becomes a cluster of indefinite symbols. In opposition to all such, Dr Paterson carefully analyses and compares passage with passage. In the journeying of Israel to Canaan he finds more than a type of the Christian going to heaven—he sees in their history a manifestation of human nature and the principles by which they were actuated, and the mistakes into which they often fell—while the righteousness and grace of Jehovah he carefully vindicates. Few preachers make so unexceptionable use of the historical. He views Bible history not so much as pointing out the connexion of events as the evolution of character—not as designed to reveal the constitution of ancient kingdoms, but as bringing out the purposes of God, and at the same time serving as warning and encouragement to those on whom “the ends of the world are come.” In the lecture he carefully examined the conduct of the spies—the effect their report had on Israel, and at the same time the workings of unbelief and the triumphs of faith. After eliciting the fair and natural meaning, he in the end briefly showed the beautiful illustration the journeyings of Israel supply of the career of the Christian as he marches to the land of eternal rest. While he carefully avoided mixing the symbolical with the historical, he brought out the analo-

gical with great force and beauty. After the unbelief and rebellion of Israel had been traced in all their workings, the lessons, which their example were meant to convey, were taught with great explicitness and effectiveness.

Among the chief excellencies evolved in the teaching of the subject of our sketch, his habits of minute and careful observation may be mentioned. Those who have read his *Manse Garden* will see that when he discharged the duties of a country pastorate he had his eyes fully open to the beauties around him. He held minute and interesting converse with the beautiful and sublime of nature—with the near and the remote—the pile of grass and the oak of the forest. This habit of observation he carries into the moral and spiritual, as well as into the natural. His eye sees God in creation, providence, and redemption, as the God of goodness and grace, and that he may thus see him he examines carefully the manifestations which each department of His works makes of their Divine Author. He is not satisfied with a general view of the landscape, or with a general view of character. He analyses both with a keen acumen, and discloses their beauties and their blemishes. After determining facts or phenomena, their cause is philosophically scrutinised and unveiled. Nor is his mind merely analytical—it is also eminently constructive. After making his materials pass a searching ordeal, he rears erections of surpassing beauty. He can arrange and combine his facts with as much skill as he determines them, and thus his mind is philosophical as well as descriptive. Observation and deduction are both performed with skill and taste. His extensive acquaintance with the Bible is also apparent in his ministrations. He knows the scripture as a whole and made up of parts. His eye is on the historical, chronological, and geographical, as well as the symbolical and spiritual. He thus displays comprehensiveness as well as acuteness of mind. To a scripture expounder, keeping the eyes open on all its different aspects is of incalculable value. It enables his hearers to fully understand the scriptures, and to read them with discernment and discrimination.

Dr Paterson's manner is inferior to his matter. He goes through his introductory services in a low sepulchral voice.

His eye seems dull and his eyebrows heavy, and his whole countenance inanimate, and it is not till he has proceeded considerably with his discourse that his countenance is raised and his eye flashes, and his whole appearance entirely changes. He can use his voice with admirable effect when he warms with his subject, and at other times he uses it colloquially and even seemingly carelessly. His pronunciation is correct, his enunciation slow, and his gestures graceful.

He was minister of the Established Church, Galashiels, and there he wrote his *Manse Garden*. From Galashiels he was transferred to St Andrew's of this city, and at the time of the disruption he retired with his people, who built for him their present elegant place of worship in Bell's Park. The congregation includes a number of our influential citizens.

In the first edition of his *Manse Garden* he prophesied a potato rot, and in his second edition he warned against prophesying, as sometimes the events did not come to pass. Had he delayed his second edition till 1846, he would have had the melancholy pleasure of recording the fulfilment of the predicted calamity.

Dr Paterson is the grandson of Old Mortality, and it may not be generally known that a descendant of Old Mortality, and, consequently, a near relative of the subject of our sketch, settled in New York, and that, through the family of the humble recorder of the virtuous valour and piety of our persecuted forefathers, the two greatest warriors of the world—Wellington and Napoleon—were connected by marriage. A brother of Napoleon and the eldest brother of the Duke of Wellington were each married to ladies of the family which settled in New York.

MAY 18, 1848.

REV. A. MEWEN, A.M.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HELENSBURGH.

THOSE who have any respect for religion inquire into the character and privileges of the place in which they propose to take up their residence. Emigrants have often hesitated to go to countries where the fields are well watered and the commercial prospects desirable, because the means of grace are scarce or unsatisfactory. They might be inclined to forego their sectional peculiarities, but the form of sound words they consider indispensable. Those who have, like Lot, allowed worldly considerations alone to determine their temporary or permanent residence, have generally met his disappointment, if not his misfortunes. As every person of principle considers the character of his permanent residence before he occupies it, so also ought such, especially when he has the charge of a family, to be careful regarding a temporary home. Many a family have commenced a career of infidelity by residing in a place where sanctuaries were absent or unfrequented, and not a few have changed their denominational views by being compelled to worship among those of a different persuasion. In some cases, no doubt, the change has been to the better, but it has an equal chance of being to the worse. It is admitted, at all hands, that every one, after being fully persuaded as to the section of the church most scriptural or desirable, ought, if possible, to have an opportunity of enjoying the fellowship of those with whom he prefers to associate. The place which is the scene of the labours of the subject of our sketch offers no objection to the most conscientious as regards this matter. In that town all the leading denominations in Scot-

land are represented. The adherents of the Established Church have there their church, and their bell, and their minister. The Free Church has also its sanctuary and its rites. Congregationalism has the honour of being the oldest residenter of all the sects there. Episcopalians have their imposing ceremonial, weekly performed, accompanied with the sound of the organ. Baptists have also their chapel and their font; and United Presbyterians are well represented by the subject of our sketch and his congregation. As we have a strong prejudice in favour of the Sabbath-going bell, we must not omit to mention that Helensburgh is well supplied in that way. Besides the Established Church bell, the bells of which in days of old, had to contend with no rivals, there are the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church bells. If the music is not particularly harmonious, the deficiency is supplied by the sweeter music which pours from every tree. Religion has not only reared its sanctuaries, but denominational rivalry has carried its efforts almost to their utmost limit; so that Churchmen and Dissenters of almost every faith may find, on their arrival there, professors of the same faith with themselves. From what has been said of some of the clergymen of that town, and from what we have to say of the others, it will appear that Helensburgh is not only supplied with ministers, but supplied with efficient ministers. Indeed, one almost regrets that so much talent should be limited to a population so small. The regret is the less, however, from the fact, that in the summer months the population is greatly increased from Glasgow, so that most of the places of worship are then comparatively well attended. Those latterly built are of an inviting appearance. The Established Church raises a very formidable-looking Norman tower to a considerable height, and boasts of a clock which goes—a recommendation which we are unable to ascribe to clocks in more imposing towns. The Episcopal Church is also neat and elegant, and has a steeple, but, as yet, no bell. The church of which the subject of our sketch is minister is, probably, the neatest of the whole. The design is simple and the workmanship excellent, and its bell—though at present a little out of sorts—sounded almost as well as if the church on which it sounds was sanc-

tioned by law. The site of the church too is lovely, affording the worshippers an help to devotion—not by its graven images—though by the by it has something very like a cross ornamenting its southern gable—but by the most significant manifestations of God, through His visible works. The congregation seems to have caught the inspiration of surrounding grandeurs, and worships with an earnestness and devotedness worthy of the place.

Last Sabbath, at fourteen minutes to twelve, the subject of our sketch gave out, as the theme of lecture, Luke xiii. 31, to the end. (The passage includes the assertion of the Pharisees, and the consequent saying of Christ regarding the character and doom of Jerusalem.) The lecturer commenced by stating that it were desirable to recapitulate the lecture on the preceding part of the chapter on account of its connexion with these words. The lecture was one of very great excellence, whether considered relatively, historically, geographically, chronologically, theologically, critically, or rhetorically. We say *relatively*, inasmuch as the connexion of the subject of discussion with the preceding part of the chapter was very strikingly brought out, and that passage, beautiful though it be in the abstract, receives tenfold more force when viewed in connexion with the conduct of the Pharisees—*geographically*, for the place where the ominous prediction was uttered was ingeniously discovered from its connexion with Herod Antipas—*chronologically*, for the time specified by the Saviour for the accomplishment of his work was very fairly elicited, and also the time when the words were spoken. But other aspects of the lecture demand more lengthened notice. The theology of it was unexceptionable and practical. The man Christ Jesus was exhibited in union with the mighty God—the work of Christ was shown to be in unison with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and at the same time with Christ's own voluntary undertaking—the guilt of men, in rejecting the testimony of Christ against themselves, was brought home with great power, and the way of access and acceptance pointed out, so that the most ignorant could not mistake. The lecturer was at great pains to show the deep sympathies of the Saviour, and that his tears were not those of the stoic (if a

stoic may be supposed to shed tears) over a relentless fate, but the tears of generous sorrow over the wilfulness and infatuation which reject the great salvation. The views he gave of the future glories of Christ when the ransomed will be around him were magnificent and thrilling. These views he showed to be the means of sustaining the Saviour as he passed through his work—the joys set before him enabled him to endure the cross and despise the shame. The discourse, moreover, was able, critically considered. The lecturer, by a very searching exegesis, brought out not only the general meaning of the subject of discourse, but its peculiar bearings, and the nicest shades of thought. He showed he possessed learning without making any unnecessary display of it. His verbal criticism was generally as acute as his criticism of sentiments was judicious. The discourse was both able and ably delivered. The lecturer keeps his manuscript before him, and occasionally refers to it, but he is generally most eloquent without it. This is probably owing, however, to the fact, that he seems to write out fully the more critical parts, while illustration and embellishment are, in some measure, left to extemporaneous effort. Towards the close of the lecture, the language employed was highly eloquent and rhetorical. We have heard that the preacher employs flowery and inflated language; but, if we may judge from this discourse, nothing could be a more mistaken view of his style. The language was severely chaste, and the delivery was animated without extravagance, and earnest without affectation. The lecture, in a word, was unexceptionable in its matter, and attractive in its manner. Its literary merits were high as its theological views were consistent, liberal, and commanding.

So much, then, for the lecture. The subject of our sketch, however, must not be estimated solely by this discourse. He possesses peculiarities of a very marked character, and excellencies which ought to be both known and enumerated. The intelligent hearer must be struck with the breadth and boldness of his views. He looks at a subject in its most comprehensive aspects and bearings. He can determine nothing regarding the meaning of an insulated text till he has fully ascertained its connections and parallels. To obtain this view, he studies

the time and place, and circumstances connected with the passage he discusses, and the other passages which are similar, either in language or in meaning. In pursuing his investigations, his knowledge of history, geography, and language, as well as his extensive knowledge of the scriptures, bears admirably. In most cases he is able to state the results of his investigations without describing the process, though, on some occasions, enough of detail is given. He keeps a firm grasp of his subject, and allows no collateral topics, however tempting, to divert him from its strong, well-defined outline. Along with this comprehensiveness of view, there is observable a different and almost opposite, but scarcely less desirable, quality, the power of minute—we had almost said microscopic—investigation. With untiring patience he can trace a word through all its variety of meaning. Knowing that views, however important and vast, may lose much, all indeed of their force, when stated in vague diction, he is careful to speak as well as to think accurately. There is a precision in his words which can be reached only by close research and study. The most delicate shade of meaning is often brought out by the happy choice of his language. This precision secures neatness as well as definiteness of diction.

Besides his powers of thought, his rhetorical powers are of a very high order. His voice is sweet, full, and harmonious, and he uses it unexceptionably. He enunciates slowly, emphatically, and earnestly, and, with one or two exceptions, his pronunciation is correct. His gestures are graceful, and generally animated. The preacher should avoid all imitation, as his mind is sufficiently vigorous to create a manner entirely his own. We consider him, in a word, one of the most promising preachers of the body with which he is connected; and should he continue to study as he has hitherto done, a place of high eminence awaits him. His mind is strong, and his manner is pleasing, and a few years will place him among the first of the United Presbyterian Church.

His people have built for him a very neat and convenient chapel, which was opened for worship above a year ago, and it is built on a new plan which congregations about to build

ought to see, as it combines neatness, cheapness, strength, and comfort.

Mr M'Ewen is the son of the Rev. W. M'Ewen, Howgate, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. He studied and graduated in Glasgow University. He also passed several sessions at different German universities, where he acquired a knowledge of the languages and the philosophy of the Continent. He was licensed by the United Secession Presbytery of Glasgow in 1845, and was ordained over the Helensburgh Church connected with that body in September of the same year. On account of his knowledge of the Continent, as well as for other qualifications, he was sent by the Board of the United Secession Church as a deputation to Switzerland, along with Drs Harper and Eadie, in the spring of 1846, to report on the German Catholic movement and the ecclesiastical affairs of the Canton de Vaud. He has laboured with acceptance and success; and his superiority is known in other places as well as in Helensburgh.

JUNE 10, 1848.

REV. JOHN LAWRIE FOGO,

ESTABLISHED CHURCH, ROW.

FEW spots on our Scottish shores possess the same romantic beauty and exhibit so much picturesque scenery as the vicinity of the Gareloch. Towards its mouth, the road from Dumbarton, after winding along many a spot where the traveller would fain linger in admiration, the village of Row opens rather unexpectedly to view, standing towards the further end of a beautiful bay of about a mile in circuit, which terminates in a long neck or point running almost across the loch. On the right hand, peeping through the wood-clad hills, are seen odd corners and chimneys of numerous villas, and numbers more may be imagined from the wreaths of blue smoke curling high in the calm air above the foliage. On the left the sun-lit laughing waves of the clear loch sparkle at the traveller's feet, and in concert with their music the woods are echoing forth the sweetest melody. On the farther side rise the hills of Roseneath, immortalised in story, clad too with alternating heath and forest, and so directly above the loch, and commanding such a view, that one could spend an unwearied day in surveying it all. Here, a little way beyond, we enter the village precincts. A few scattered cottages, more hid than revealed, a little bridge across a burn, "Post Office" painted on a window, a road or two winding a little way up hill, then lost in trees, a common with a peacock proudly strutting on it, some shining-faced urchins that Sunday morning washed for church, lolling over a stile, observing it, and a few loiterers about the inn door-way, talking in undertone, because of reverence for the day, completes the picture till, at another turn

of the road, a few steps more, and above a common stands the church, with the churchyard, shaded by the arms of old plane trees that have waved to and fro in the wind and sunshine for centuries together. A cottage or two stands near—the village school and schoolmaster's house—whitewashed, glittering in the calm morning sunlight. The church itself is not a very old or very attractive building, being rather clumsy than otherwise, but strongly and substantially built, almost square, relieved in front by a small cupola or belfrey. Its age is about three-fourths of a century. Other churches, older, have stood on its site; the churchyard presents evidence of this—some grave stones of very remote date, the inscriptions whereon no Old Mortality has saved from the certain work of time, lie scattered through it. Conspicuous is one in the wall fronting the road, Chinese-shaped rather, bearing on the one side;—

Out Of Loe And Respeicte The Paerish Had To There
Minister They Bulded This Tombe 1709.

And on the reverse side the following Latin inscription, setting forth the virtues of a certain Rev. R. Anderson :—

Hic Situs Est Mr Robertus Anderson Qui Cum Ecclesiae
Rowensi Per Quinque Plus Minus Lustra Summa Cum
Laude Nec Minore Cum Fructu Praefuisset Immatura Quam-
vis Morte In Ipso Aetatis Vigore Praereptus Famam Tamen
Sibi Superstitem Monumento hoc lapidio longe Perennio-
rem Reliquit.

Decessit Cal. Mart. Anno Dom. MDCCVIII.

The parish might have shown their “respeicte” for their minister by an English epitaph and good grammar, and Mr Anderson's virtues might at least have edified succeeding congregations. Here lie too the remains of Henry Bell, with no stone to mark the spot of his last repose. Groups now begin to gather in the churchyard—country folks met for a little gossip and unburdening of each other's minds before the church door opens. They sit beneath the shade of these branching planes, or bask in the sunshine, and speculate in cattle, corn, and neighbours' characters. How often have the dead beneath them done the same! How strange the medley—the

quiet dead, the living seated on their tombs hastening to join them, and reviling one another by the way. At length the bell tolls forth its summons, by no means musically, but making ample amends with sound, the crowds begin to move slowly, and drop off gradually into the sanctuary, we follow with them.

At twelve o'clock last Sabbath forenoon the subject of our sketch entered his pulpit, and gave out, as subject of praise, four verses of the 95th psalm. He then engaged in prayer at considerable length, and instead of a second singing he commenced to read the 44th psalm. Having read the first four verses, he then stated that the subject of discourse was the fourth verse—"Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away." The afternoon service resumes at two, and is usually over about four; but our space excludes an epitome of the afternoon service.

In regard to the forenoon discourse, besides its intrinsic merits, circumstances lent it a charm to the observant mind. In order to feel the force of these, the reader must convey himself to the place where it was delivered. The church where the subject of our sketch preaches is one of the best models of a parish church of the last century. Its low walls and small windows, and peculiar shape and arrangements, tell that it was the abode of a former generation which now quietly sleep around it in the old churchyard, while the enormous planes, of whose age no one can speak, shade at once on three sides the remains of these generations and the place where they worshipped, and, on the other side, the old ocean, which in days of old mirrored their reflection, still spreads its glassy surface before the men of the present day. The subject of our sketch, then, in delivering the discourse, stood among many generations. While before and on each side of him former generations quietly slept, and an important assembly of the men and women of the present day had laid aside the usual avocations of life, and in the quiet of the Sabbath were present to hear what was to be spoken, he announced for his text, "Man is like to vanity—his days are as a shadow that passeth away." As he thus spoke, the silent gravestones visible from the windows offered their significant inscriptions in proof of the truth

of the text—the old trees which had with their shadows sheltered former generations seemed to nod assent to the statement, while the pews and the walls and the roof of the old edifice seemed to echo its answer. The preacher thus occupied a high vantage ground. The text-book spoke according to the intimations and associations of the external scene, and every heart at all alive to the peculiarities of the place, responded to the voice of the preacher as he said, man is like to vanity. But while the text was in unison with the circumstances, at first sight it strikes us as scarcely in unison with the duties and circumstances of the auditors. The audience was composed of persons engaged in the active pursuits of life. The sympathies of fathers and mothers—the hopes of sons and daughters—the buoyancy and activities of youth, and the flush of high health all played around the speaker. Did he then wish to extinguish these sympathies—to crush these hopes—to stop these activities, and to render his auditors inactive and uninterested in the affairs of life as those who slept in the tomb around them? In the hands of a less skilful preacher such might have been the seeming object of a discourse on such a text—such has been the seeming object of many discourses—but our preacher aimed to refine sympathy and raise it to heaven—to stretch hope beyond time—to direct activity to laying up treasures in heaven—to stimulate enterprise in the warfare which successfully ends in the crowns and palms of heaven. Never did a sermon more emphatically write *vanity* on a world separate from God, and importance on temporal life, as the commencement of an existence to run parallel with that of the Eternal. The same voice which pronounced vanity on a life of mere worldliness, pronounced a blessing on a life of activity when the person and his labours and his thoughts were all given to God. We wish to state strongly this excellence of the discourse. The difference between a life of selfish isolation from God and a life spent in his service, was most strikingly pointed out. Time appeared all important and its interests of inestimable value, as they stood in relation to a hastening future. But besides this discrimination of relationship and tendency, the delineation of character and circumstances deserves notice. The preacher, with the hand of a

master, portrayed the poor godless man who has no thought and no treasure in heaven. He proved him to be an anomaly in God's creation—a being superior to the inferior creation in his mental and moral powers, but their inferior in privilege—a being with hopes created with no seeming object but to be crushed—one doomed to toil and care without reward and without prospect. On this part of his subject he indirectly and with great power demonstrated the necessity of a future state, in order to be consistent with the harmony of the universe, and with the justice of God. But while he presented the poor and godless man as an anomaly, he at the same time showed how religion—the recognition of the great revelations of the Bible—dignifies the humblest man, and confers on him a nobility which birth and title are unable to boast. It is also to be noticed that the rich were not overlooked in this discourse. Their portion, when limited to this life, was reduced to a very contemptible affair in their own and in every person's estimation. The most humbling thing he said, was that when lauded by their inferiors, they had often the consciousness that the praise ascribed to them was but ill deserved. They are unable to forbid the idea that the plaudits raised to them are in ill-accordance with their deserts.

From the discourse and the remarks made, it was obvious that our preacher is a shrewd and accurate observer of men and things. With the privations and toils of the poor he seems equally intimate as with the *ennui* and restlessness of the rich. He follows the working man as he anticipates the day to repair to his labour, and watches him till the shadows of the evening release him from his toil. He enters into his feelings and views, and reads in his anticipations the evidence of a coming eternity. He also watches the rich in his palace, and marks how a mitre or a crown is unable to prevent or cure a pain—how, in a word, the intellectual and moral powers of man intimate to the great that wealth and worldly pleasure are, after all, only a portion for brutes. Nor is he less intimate with the only sources which can afford satisfaction. As he sees men “dropping pitchers into empty wells and growing old in drawing nothing up,” he urges them to repair to the fountain of living waters, and there fully quench their thirst. In recon-

ciliation to God—in communion with the Father and the Son—in cherishing the hopes of eternity, man's true dignity and happiness he shows to consist. Our preacher, moreover, possesses a vigorous and independent mind. Many preachers, throughout a long life, satisfy themselves by merely reiterating the thoughts of others; but, on hearing this preacher, one is conscious that he hears one who can think for himself. He takes a firm hold of his subject, and though the mechanical part of his discourse is occasionally at fault, the fresh and vigorous illustrations always please and sometimes almost startle. The poor and the rich meet together in his faithful rebukes. He allows neither the poverty of the one nor the riches of the other to apologise for their wordliness and wickedness. He treats both with the freedom with which He who is no respecter of persons authorises his servants to speak. There is also in his preaching a hearty earnestness which can only be associated with thought and feeling. The mere mechanical preacher may weep, but he cannot feel. He may cry aloud, but he cannot think aloud. The subject of our sketch, however, speaks as one who is delivering sentiments which he *knows* and feels to be important, and which bear on the everlasting welfare of his hearers. It must be admitted, however, that his manner is inferior to his matter. His enunciation is occasionally indistinct, and his pronunciation not always perfect. He reads his sermons from a careful manuscript, and some of his gestures are not in accordance with graceful reading. These, however, are but minor faults, and, fortunately for the preacher, his hearers are too much occupied with his thoughts to have leisure or inclination to censure his manner. We observed that in his introductory services he omits reading a chapter and the second singing, usual in most churches. His prayers are appropriate and impressive, and his manner, during them, unexceptionable. The only thing that struck us particularly in the service, was the old and almost obsolete practice of gathering the collection in ladles handed about, from pew to pew, among the people. How this barbarous practice originated we know not, and still less can we account for its continuance in a place where so many people of taste attend. Think of a congregation, the moment after they sing

the praises of God, having an antiquated box thrust below their noses, while the clink of coppers rings through the church, lately vocal with praise, and then, to crown the absurdity, the blessing immediately follows. The only advantage we know resulting from this practice is the pleasure which the rich must enjoy as the ring of their silverlings contrasts with the dull noise of the men of copper.

The chief and almost only complaint we hear among his people is the unreasonable length of his prayer before sermon.

Mr Lawrie Fogo (the last being an adopted name) is, we understand, a native of Sanquhar. He is about forty-six years of age. In appearance he is prepossessing. His features are open and regular, marked by a thoughtful repose; in height he is rather above middle stature, and though time has somewhat thinned his locks, he bears the impress of ruddy health. His demeanour is cheerful; we should feel inclined to believe him constitutionally of a peculiarly happy temperament. He received his education at Edinburgh University, and was ordained at Row about the year 1832, at a rather memorable period in the history of this little place. The Row heresy was then at its height. The Rev. Mr Campbell, whose successor Mr Lawrie is, had just recently been deposed, and the congregation was in a very divided and distracted state. He entered on his ministry under great disadvantages, but these were soon overcome, and he has since laboured with great acceptability in the parish, receiving numerous proofs of the attachment of his flock, and is warmly beloved and esteemed by every denomination of Christians.

JUNE 17, 1848.

REV. THOMAS MONRO, M.A.,

ESTABLISHED CHURCH, CAMPSIE.

THE love of distinction is one of the most prominent and useful characteristics of humanity. But for it and kindred feelings the human race would speedily degenerate into savagism, and desire nothing higher than the continuance of mere existence. The sports of childhood owe all their pleasure to this feeling—the primer and Lennie are studied at its bidding, and but for its influence our academies and colleges would soon be shut, and books would be locked up in the vatican. The rustic, as he tends his flock, constructs his reed so as to emit sweeter sounds than those of his fellows, and he carves his club better than his contemporaries. Those who have nothing else to do attire more gaily and live more sumptuously, all for the sake of excelling, and the fair one remains long at the glass to catch a larger share than her rivals of the passing gale of praise. Like all the other powers and feelings of man, this powerful motive impels to the evil as well as to the laudable. The pickpocket feels his pride wounded as a more successful rival relates his feats of dexterity. The highway-man is chagrined that one more daring robbed and murdered a party that he was afraid to assail. But besides the good and the bad, it has a great deal to do with a class of objects which may be ranged among the indifferent. They have not virtue enough to maintain a place among the good, and they have nothing sufficiently marked to rank them among the bad. This class may be known as the indeterminate, because society neither approves nor condemns them. The bird-nester and the members of the turf are urged on by this principle. The gay and the fashion-

able world owes its very existence to this feeling. The rich build houses too large for comfort, and the poor build houses too costly for their means to gratify this feeling. The lawyer pleads a bad cause energetically, in order to plead better than his rival, and the success of some of our senators is owing to this all pervading influence. The manifestations of this agency may be all very well among the living, but it cuts a sorry figure among the dead. In the house appointed for all living, "where beggars and kings, the clown and haughty lord," quietly mix together, its appearance is out of place. It garnishes the sepulchre of the great, and writes them distinguished where distinction has ceased. Even in the house of God, it has been known to intrude. It has created partitions there between the rich and the poor—it has awakened the sound of the organ to the gay assembly, while the poor man sat unsung and uncharmed. It has hung the gallery pews of the great with drapery, while the neighbouring pew of the humble poor remains unmarked. In such a case as this extremes have indeed met. The church bears the emblem of distinction, while outside the church the devouring grave is doing its work of "staining the pride of human glory," and reducing the great and the poor to unmarked dust, and obliterating the name and the title and the virtues from the breathing marble. For a few years this love of distinction may keep up the memorial of the object of its regard, but after a few centuries have rolled on where is it to be found? Interrogate the monument which has battled with a thousand years, and the oracle which once eloquently spoke of the virtues of the *remains* it watches, and it is now dumb. The place where its testimony was borne may be seen, but the characters are effaced, and the dust has become common and unknown. What a terrible rebuke is this to the all-pervading desire! The levelling forces at work in the material creation have combined to blot out every trace of its workmanship. Such thoughts as these were suggested by a visit to the church and churchyard of Campsie. The church bears the marks of the feeling described, but the old churchyard sadly rebukes the folly. Some of the pews in the gallery tell of distinction, but the churchyard is an indiscriminating leveller. By learned interrogation that churchyard tells

that it has received the dead for the greater part of a thousand years—but it sternly refuses to say anything of them that have slept more than two hundred and fifty years in its graves. It tells of some of the martyrs who in Glasgow sealed their testimony with their blood, and it tells of one who ministered in its old church two centuries ago, and who was murdered in the neighbourhood; but its older grave stones are provokingly dumb, and however urgently questioned they sternly conceal a tale they once told. Below them the dust of many generations mingle, but they, perfidious to their trust, or rather overcome in their long vigils by the powerful hand of time, have yielded their trust, and allowed the names committed to their keeping to perish irrecoverably. But besides this rebuke of vain distinction, the testimony lifted weekly up in the church is well calculated to keep it in check. There the vanity of mere pomp and circumstance is proclaimed from Sabbath to Sabbath—and there real worth, the essential and eternal dignity of virtue, and religion, is proclaimed. There ambition is taught to seek crowns which will endure longer than the sun.

At a few minutes past twelve last Sabbath the Rev. Mr Monro entered his pulpit, and gave out as subject of praise the first four verses of the 119th Psalm. He then offered prayer, which occupied fully twenty minutes. Other two verses of the 119th Psalm having been sung, he gave out, at twenty-five minutes to one o'clock, the 8th chapter of Exodus as matter of exposition. He concluded his remarks at five minutes past one, having occupied half an hour. He then prayed about four minutes, and afterwards the four verses of the 78th Psalm were sung. At sixteen minutes past one, Col. iii. 2, "Set your affections on things above," was read as the subject of discourse. The discourse was over at four minutes to two, having occupied about forty minutes. After praise and the baptism of three children, and prayer and praise again, the congregation was dismissed at half-past two, having been together two and a half hours.

We may remark in the outset that the prayers before and after the discourses were devotional, appropriate, and excellent, but very long. The exposition or running commentary on the chapter was excellent. As a general rule, improvements

on our translation of the Scriptures were better to be let alone, but in some cases there may be alterations very properly suggested. When the results of learning are stated, as in this case, without pedantic details, there can be no objection to occasional criticism in the pulpit. Whether the criticism on this occasion is correct we shall not pretend to say, as the doings of these Egyptian magicians have caused perplexity to the profoundest of scholars. Taking the exposition as a whole, it was judicious, popular, practical, and fascinatingly delivered. The discourse demands more lengthy consideration. In the order it was complete. The exordium was neat and suggestive, the divisions natural and logical, and pertinent. The language was throughout flowing and highly eloquent. A common subject was invested with thrilling interest, chiefly on account of the language employed in illustration. The description of the "things above"—the future heaven of the saints—was glowing, dazzling. Never did its landscapes appear more lovely, nor its everlasting hills seem to reverberate more audibly the thunderings of the hosannas of its ransomed inhabitants than when the preacher presented the external aspects of "the happy land." The remarks made on the character of its inhabitants—the purity and peace of which they were made the possessors, were admirably brought out. There was much in his brilliant description well calculated to arrest attention and to entice the imagination. The preacher, however, who uses no notes, evidently overlooked one of the chief ideas suggested by his text. The scenery and character of the inhabitants are not to be overlooked, but "it is Christ sitting at the right hand of God" to which the text directly points. It is to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant—it is to the throne of God and the Lamb, and to the Lamb in the midst of the throne, that the apostle invites special attention. What were the scenery and what the society of heaven but for the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

"There my best friends and kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

It is never to be forgotten that the Bible takes care to keep Jesus prominently before men, both in the gospel and in heaven. He is the centre of all Bible doctrines—the sun of all its pro-

mises—the first and the last—the beginning and the end—and heaven without him is as great a blank to the Christian as the gospel without him, if such a thing could be. Each of these, as a system, is as a system without a centre—a world without a sun. The preacher took care to make Christ prominent in his prayers, and we have no doubt but generally he is the burden of his preaching. With the exception of this omission, the discourse was altogether a masterpiece. The preacher reasoned well as to the certainty of a future state. His argument was intelligible and resistless. His discourse was a torrent of chaste and finished eloquence. Every sentence was constructed according to the most winning arts of the orator. For impassioned eloquence it would do no discredit to the greatest orators of the day. The action of the preacher is animated—occasionally to a fault. His voice is full, melodious, and well modulated; his enunciation is distinct, and his pronunciation correct. He reads the Scriptures emphatically and energetically, and quotes them with great effect. His language is quite a model for the pulpit. It is chaste and popular—philosophical and lucid—nervous and flowing—uniform, yet varied. Instead of being a string of similarly constructed sentences, his diction varies with his subject. Now the simplest sentence—now the pointed antithesis—now the stately climax. His preaching happily combines the imaginative with the argumentative—the persuasive with the descriptive. It is impossible to remain unmoved and un-devotional under his descriptions and appeals. He paints with the hand of a master, and his pictures are often very pretty. Often when the admirer of the beautiful gazes and wonders, he is struck with some of the strong features portrayed, and hence while he surveys the lovely he is struck with the power of goodness and the majesty of truth. We consider him one of our most attractive preachers, and did he enjoy good health he would soon cause his fame to spread far beyond the bounds of his present sphere, extended and important though that sphere is. His large church, which can accommodate above 1600 people, is well attended, there being generally a congregation of above a thousand people present, and a more attentive audience we have seldom seen. During the whole of the

lengthy service they show no symptoms of impatience, but listen with an attention worthy of the place.

From what we have seen of the preacher, we should conclude that the following are some of his leading characteristics. He is evidently a good linguist. It is probably impossible to be a good English scholar without a knowledge of several other languages. At all events, it is impossible to possess such a command of the English language as that shown by our preacher, without having studied minutely the languages on which it is founded, and from whose vocabularies it has largely drawn. The nicest shades of thought can be brought out only by those who have studied language, philosophically as well as by the grammar and lexicon. Some of our popular orators can speak fluently, though they know little of the origin or idiom of our language; but the oratory of our preacher is of another class, and betrays a knowledge, extensive and correct, of the principles and peculiarities of our most difficult of languages. But his preaching not only betrays the linguist, it also reveals a mind of vigorous and varied powers. Even in the sterner attributes it is not deficient, for it can admirably collect and arrange any number of facts, and reason with unobjectionable accuracy, but it excels in the imaginative. His language is poetry. His thoughts are always attired in gorgeous drapery drawn from nature and art, but especially from the former. He seeks emblems in the surrounding scenery in the splendour of an eastern sky, and clothes what often appears unattractive in a noon-day splendour. Indeed, he is in some danger of becoming too much of a poetical preacher, yet be it understood that he quotes no hackneyed lines, but merely pours forth his own lucid thoughts in the gorgeous drapery of poetical fancy. A mind so essentially poetical is in some danger of being wearied with the slow and dry process of stern and unpoetical hermeneutics, and of allowing the hagiography to explain the epistle—the poetical books and doctrinal. Our preacher is by temperament as well as by mental calibre placed beyond all danger of becoming a dull preacher. Soon as he appears before the congregation his soul seems in his subject. Whether in reading, in prayer, in praise, or in preaching, he seems in earnest, and his finely modulated musical voice ex-

presses the energy within. The delivery of Candlish scarcely exceeds in animation of voice and gesture that of our preacher. He is always energetic, often highly eloquent, and occasionally violent.

Mr Monro was born in Stonehaven in 1810, and attended the universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. He was five years governor of Watson's Hospital, and was presented to the parish of Fala in 1841 by the Town Council of Edinburgh. He was translated to the parish of Campsie in 1844, where his ministry is highly appreciated by the large congregation.

JULY 15, 1848.

REV. JOHN BONAR,

RENFIELD STREET FREE CHURCH.

THE enemies of Christianity have sometimes brought that as a charge against it which is its glory. They point us to its various sections, and contemptuously ask how that religion can be from God which presents so many aspects, and which is administered under such a variety of forms. The sneer is pointless, for it is the glory of Christianity that it can assume endless forms without infringing on its unity of spirit and design. It is to be observed that its Divine author when about to introduce it as a system designed to embrace the circumference of the globe, and the circuit of time, chose the centre of the civilised world as the scene of those great transactions which would form its basis. The Redeemer was lifted on the cross in the centre of all nations, and his purpose was to draw all men to his standard. On the north of Jerusalem lay the nations of Europe enveloped in midnight darkness; on the one side the trackless deserts of Africa; and on the other, India and China, the dupes of false and delusive systems; while in the southern ocean innumerable islands were in the course of formation which would "also receive the law." For an object of no less magnitude than to gather together in one all these nations in the fulness of the time, was the work of redemption accomplished, and the foundations of Christianity laid. Its author, knowing the diversity of character it would embrace in its pale—the prejudice of nation and of race which it would have to assail, so arranged his great scheme that under a variety of forms it could communicate its blessings; and races remote in figure and language, as well as in locality, were to rank un-

der its banners, and it was necessary that it should be such as to establish its benign influence over the inward man, without violating those distinctions of race and of nation which may possibly exist till the end of time. And how marvellous a proof is this of the manifold wisdom of God. Men, in the pride of their intellect, can scarcely construct a system of government for a small local fraction of mankind to last for a few years, or, at most, centuries; but here we find a system which is alike adapted to men of every clime and age, and which will embrace as one family, in the latter days, all the tribes on earth, and will last as long as the sun. The subject of the proud despot, and the member of the fierce democracy, can alike feel the power of the truth, and call Jesus master. The proud Caucasian, in his highest stage of civilisation, weeps at the cross along with the untutored inhabitant of the rock, and while the former naturally wishes to ally that religion which brings him such inestimable blessings with forms and splendour, and the newly-reclaimed savage worships under his bush, a sacrifice holy and probably alike acceptable ascends before God from each. It is also to be observed, that where Christianity is feeblest forms are most stringent. Probably real Christianity and sectarian punctilios are in the inverse ratio. The Episcopalian, or Presbyterian, or Independent, who prays devoutly that his favourite formulas may cover the earth, is not so far advanced in Christianity as were the Jews under their restrictive system, when they prayed that the whole earth might be full of the glory of the Lord. By all means let each sect maintain what it holds to be the true form and fashion of the house of God; but let none in the sacred name of Christianity pronounce those beyond the pale of the church who may not choose to rally round their banner. That solitary man in yon far off island in the sea, causes his voice of prayer to be heard in heaven, though he has no fellow-worshipper to join him, as effectually as that official who in pomp and splendour leads the devotions of the crowded congregation. Such is Christianity, that the most complex and gorgeous forms are unable to conceal its simple dignity, while at the same time it can live in the desert, in the humble heart, where no temple made with hands has been erected, but where the rude canopy

of the sky covers the head of the solitary worshipper. Taking such a view as this is the best possible cure for bigotry and intolerance. Men thus begin to find that it is not necessary to enter the kingdom at the expense of shutting others out—that while the member of the little democracy may be admitted, the member of the great ecclesiastical hierarchy need not be excluded—that, in a word, the blessings of the kingdom of heaven reach men in every country and clime, and also in every section of the church. Our thoughts were turned into this train by a visit to Renfield Street Free Church last Sabbath. There unity without uniformity is suggested. The place of worship has been the same, and the gospel preached has been the same for many years, but in externals very considerable differences have taken place. Once the discipline was administered on the strictest form of the Old Light Burghers; by and by the national faith was professed, and latterly the standard of the Free Church has been hoisted, and who will predict that this is the last form in which Christianity will appear in this place? Who of the most bigotted of the race would pronounce the faith of the Old Light Burgher vain because he is an Old Light Burgher? Who would declare salvation impossible in the case of the adherent of the National Church, because of its connexion with Cæsar? and who will doubt the piety of the present congregation, though it boast neither of the name of Old Light nor sanction of parliament, but whose formulæ date no farther back than 1843? We shall not contend with those who maintain that the Free Church is the Old National Church, because it is one of our axioms that two things cannot be in the same place at the same time. If any of those now members of that congregation were wont in former days to take sectarian views of matters, their own present position is the best refutation of their error. We need not say that the views stated above show that there is nothing in either of the phases through which the congregation has passed incompatible with Christianity, and though one form may be more favourable than another for the development of Christian character, the children of the kingdom find their way to heaven under the various names of Antiburgher, Burgher, Churchman, and Dissenter, bond and free, and then

they drop their particular Shibboleths for that new name which shall characterise all the citizens of the new Jerusalem, all the members of the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven. We some time ago gave a sketch of the former pastor of Renfield Street Free Church, and we now subjoin a short account of his successor, whose name stands at the head of these remarks.

At five minutes past two Mr Bonar entered his pulpit, and gave out as subject of praise the 126th Psalm. He then offered prayer, which occupied nearly twenty minutes. He next read and made some cursory remarks on 1 Corinthians 11th chap. At eight minutes to three, Acts viii. 4—8, were given out as subject of discourse. The 8th verse was to be chiefly considered. It thus reads, "And there was great joy in that city."

The matter of the discourse was scriptural, practical, evangelical, and important. The preacher has no taste for theoretical speculation, but preaches the Word. Christ occupies the place in his discourse which he occupies in the Bible, and in the system of redemption. He is kept prominently in view as the centre around which all doctrines radiate, and from which all life and light and joy proceed. His theology is scriptural, in opposition both to theoretical and sectarian preaching. Not a few preachers seem to have always some human creed or system in their eye, and the very quotations they give from Scripture are selected to prove the correctness of some dogma rather than as ultimate authorities. Our preacher pays no such deference to anything human, however important. He preaches Christianity—not Calvinism, nor Armenianism, nor other human authority. He also shows cause why the Author of redemption is thus prominently urged on our attention. We expect not the impugnors of our Lord's divinity—the deniers of his atonement, to give prominence to Christ—indeed, it were better and more consistent to give him still less than they do; but those who believe in his divinity—in the vicarious character of his work—those who call themselves by his very name, can never extol him sufficiently. Christianity must be everything or nothing. The middle ground has been a thousand times proved untenable. Those who have forgone our Lord's divinity, generally in the end forego their own

humanity, and retrograde into nothingism. It is not, however, the mere form of sound words which will retain a savour of genial Christianity in the Church—it is such preaching as that of the subject of our sketch, where Christ is shown to be not only the centre of a system of doctrine, but the centre of influence and the source of joy. The introduction of the discourse was also exceedingly appropriate. The scattering of the Church at Jerusalem, and the consequent effects of that dispersion were finely adumbrated by the tempest, which purifies the atmosphere and carries to the waste places, the seeds of those plants and flowers, which adorn and beautify what would otherwise be bare and sightless. The preacher not only states the doctrines plainly and scripturally, but he recommends the truth to every one's conscience. He ever kept in view that, while Philip preached to Samaritans, he was preaching to another class, and a class that equally needed salvation. We have oftener than once heard a preacher dilate on the state of Athens or Corinth before visited by the gospel, and exhaust all his compassions and all his eloquence on these ancient cities, while those before him were virtually forgotten. Our preacher, however, while he showed the danger of those to whom his text primarily refers, forgot not his own audience. While he showed cause why the Samaritans had joy in their souls and city when they received the love of the truth, he insisted that the same effects follow still, and that the effect of belief and the fruit of the spirit is joy—a joy with which a stranger intermeddles not. Not only is the matter of the preacher of the right sort, but the gravity of the preacher recommends his matter. He generally stands erect, and his countenance is the emblem of solemnity and tranquillity. While he speaks of the peace of God, that peace seems to have settled on his brow. While he speaks of heavenly joy, a ray from the excellent joy seems to rest on himself. But while his matter bids defiance to criticism, and while the gravity of his manner in a great measure disarms it, there is still not a little in his public appearances obviously liable to objection. There is what we shall call the *a priori* evidence against him—LONG SERVICES. We seldom admit the legitimacy of this said *a priori* argument, but in this case it has been found good in so many instances,

and bad in almost none, that we count on it with tolerable certainty. In those churches where the preaching, or praying, or singing, is going on as people retire from other churches, there is a *prima facie* case against the manner or matter of the minister. Now, in this case, the matter is blameless, but there are obvious causes at work in unnecessarily prolonging these services. The prayer before sermon, while it occupied nearly twenty minutes, was repetitive and indefinite. Sin, when confessed, was in too general and abstract terms. Blessings, when implored, were certainly not specified, and favours received were not formally acknowledged. The matter it contained would have been better if much briefer stated. While we are no advocates for book prayers, we are decided enemies to the rambling prayers, which distract and fret rather than edify a congregation, and those who lead a congregation should be sure that they make themselves familiar with the wishes and wants of the people, which would prevent incoherent and inconclusive speaking. The discourse, too, excellent and all-important though it was, could have been delivered much more effectively in one-half the time. The preacher uses no notes, and while he never shows the least embarrassment or hesitancy, frequently indulges in repeating both ideas and sentences in the same words. It would greatly add to the attractiveness of his delivery did he throw his thoughts in a neater diction. We submit, then, that careful preparation would reduce his sermons to the ordinary length, while his people would be allowed the usual time for family and domestic duties. We have often marvelled at ministers preaching away quite coolly on the *private time* of the auditors, while neither the clock before them, nor other congregations passing them, nor their own congregation rising and leaving, disturbs their imperturbable tranquillity. In the case in question, it was about a quarter-past four before the congregation was dismissed; and not a few of the people took the liberty of making their departure about the time they ought to have been dismissed. There is one more blemish which we must mention. The preacher, while he possesses one of the very best of voices, uses it very imperfectly. In reading the Psalm at the commencement of worship (the 126th), he commenced each verse

on a high key, and ended on a very low one. In the progress of the four lines, he allowed it to fall several notes—no matter whether the sense was for or against such a descent. In reading the chapter, the same defect occasionally was obvious; and, in prayer, he sometimes degenerated into a sing-song, which, while it has to some the appearance of unction, has, on the musical ear, a most offensive effect. We have seldom heard a voice so excellent, more objectionably modulated. It displays enough of variety, but it is not varied according to the principles of melody. In preaching, the modulation is greatly better, and, indeed, as he warms with his subject, his delivery becomes unobjectionable. We have stated that he stands erect in preaching, using almost no gesture, unless occasionally raising one or both hands. His delivery is slow and distinct, and his pronunciation generally correct.

Mr Bonar is a native of Cramond, and he is a cousin of the other Bonars in the Free Church. He was ordained in 1826, and went to Aberdeen, in December, 1846; and was removed from Aberdeen to Glasgow about six months ago, to take the pastorate of the congregation of Dr Willis, who had been removed to a professorship in Toronto. Since his coming to Glasgow the congregation has increased, and already it is ardently attached to his person and ministry. It is not to detract from but to augment his popularity that we have pointed out, what appears to us, and to many in Glasgow, to derogate from it. With a little attention his manner would be as unobjectionable as his matter, and both second to few clergyman in Glasgow.

Mr Bonar's forefathers, for four generations, were all clergymen of the Church of Scotland; and hence he is the fifth, as he was formerly a minister of that church. His father was sometime minister in Ramshorn of this city.

JULY 22, 1848.

REV. ROBERT M'DONALD,

FREE CHURCH, BLAIRGOWRIE.

THE experience of the last four thousand years proves that unity of design is essential to success. In other words, experience shows that the powers of man admit not of a division among a variety of pursuits. It must be granted, however, that there are many co-relative and subordinate ideas which must be attended to in the prosecution of the leading pursuit, and hence those who have seemingly a plurality of offices may, in some cases, be labouring away at their one object. To this peculiarity of man, the fact that clergymen, generally, are bad business men, may be distinctly traced. The gap between the sacred and the secular is too wide to admit of one labouring successfully on both sides. The great mistake has always been in ministers assuming duties which come not properly within their sphere. The office of deacon, in some bodies, seems till lately to have been divided between the ministers and elders, and even in cases where churches are fully organised, clergymen are often, from necessity or choice, compelled to do the duty of others. Instead of giving themselves exclusively to the ministry of the Word, where are they not to be found? Arranging for public meetings—perambulating cities and villages to raise funds for some benevolent or religious object—conducting the business of almost every society—treasurers, secretaries, directors, patrons, visitors of every institution, and oftener in the place of business than in their studies, and on platforms than in the pulpit. As a general rule, the business clergyman is generally a very inferior pastor of a church. He is more taken up with other matters than with the welfare of

his people. His study becomes a weariness, and the routine of pastoral duty intolerable. He lives and moves amid the stir of public matters, and the quiet of domestic and sedentary life offers no charms to him. Worse still, the duties of business and of the pulpit are both very inefficiently discharged. Knowing little of public feeling mistakes are every day made, and the pulpit is filled very inefficiently.

It is one of the most remarkable features of the Free Church that a number of its clergymen seem to have united, in no very imperfect manner, what experience seemed to have declared inalienable—the business of the pulpit with the business of the council-chamber. Every thing in that church is done by its ministers. A Candlish, a Tweedie, a Guthrie, a Buchanan, and a M'Donald, are the moving spirits of the business as well as of the theology of that church, and few will charge any of them with incompetence as regards either department. They can plan churches, colleges, and schools, and endow them. They can perambulate the country, not only as evangelists, but as philanthropists and deacons. One is the apostle of the sustentation fund, another of manses, and another of schools; and thus, instead of the secular being done by laymen, they do almost the whole matter themselves. It is well known that the clergyman, whose name heads this sketch, is the great apostle of education. Chiefly by his efforts has a fund of £50,000 been collected for erecting schools in connexion with the Free Church. Wherever he went large collections were raised, till his purpose was fully realised. Those who would account for the success of the Free Church, may find much in the fact that it seems to include so many of the good business clergymen of the time. It may be a question how far it is desirable to leave business to those who sustain a higher office, but it is not of the philosophy of the matter but of its facts that we treat at present, and it is very clear that, to the activity of the Free Church clergymen, the secular as well as the sacred of the Free Church is indebted. It is also evident that some of the most active business clergymen are the most efficient pulpit men, and of these cases the subject of our present sketch is one.

At eleven o'clock last Sabbath he entered the pulpit of

Free St Matthew's of this city, and gave out the last four verses of the 132d Psalm as the subject of praise. He then offered a prayer which occupied nearly 25 minutes, and after the second singing he then prayed again very briefly. At twelve minutes to twelve o'clock he announced as his text Mat. i. 21, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." The preacher commenced by saying that when a child is born the first question of the parent is, what shall be the name? Various considerations determine the name. Some adopt a name from the fancy of the moment—others choose the name their fathers or their neighbours choose before them—and others select the name out of respect to a relative or friend. Whatever reason determines the choice it is seldom dependent on anything in the child itself, or from anything which it may be about to do or suffer, unless when immediate inspiration suggests the name. To parents the future is all conjecture. No parent can tell what shall be on the morrow, or whether his child shall see the morrow. We have before us, in our text, a singular case—a name not given by man—given not after the child is born, but before it see light. It is given, too, on account of what the child was to do and suffer. Mark what is written—"Thou shalt bring forth a son, and call his name Jesus, *for* he shall save," &c. From these words we learn, 1st, That Christ has a people in the world. 2d, Christ's purpose regarding his people—He shall save them; and, 3d, Christ's fitness for his work—Thou shalt call, &c. We omit illustrations.

The introduction to the discourse was striking and original—the division logical and natural—embracing and exhausting the chief ideas of the text, and the illustrations of the first two heads of discourse were unexceptionable. All that was said of the last head—the fitness of Jesus for his work—was true, instructive, and impressive, but the remarks were not textual. In the term "Jesus" he might have found the qualities desiderated, but the preacher adopted general views of Christ's character and his work, thereby giving himself ampler illustration, at the expense of that distinctiveness which a textual illustration would have supplied. This, how-

ever, was the only blemish, if blemish it could be called. The discourse, taking it all in all, was most masterly, both as regards its matter and delivery. The preacher deals with difficult doctrines as they are treated in the Scriptures. On his first head—Christ's people—he did not deem it necessary to defend the doctrines involved in the fact that Christ has a special people, he merely offered it as it is taught in the Bible, correctly assuming that, if he adheres to the Scriptures he will be led into no difficulty or contradiction. Not only does he steer clear of argument, he mentions not even the doctrines formally. Many, in preaching from such a text, would have a great deal to say of election, and effectual calling, and perseverance, and kindred topics, but our preacher satisfied himself with a simple illustration of the text and similar passages, and never once dogmatically mentioned these doctrines. He taught that Christ has a people exactly as the Scriptures affirm it, and found it unnecessary to make any attack, or any defence of the fact. He showed, under the 2d head, that Christ saves his people, without any reference to dogmatic theology, and without infringing the freedom or responsibility of man. There was a breadth of view taken of the subject which necessarily excluded the little artifices of the mere doctrinalist. The hearers listened, not as to a skilful casuist, but as to one who preached the Word. They never had it in their power to demur or to doubt, for the Scriptures were quoted so plentifully and so fairly as to silence all objection. It deserves special notice that while the preacher evidently taught salvation by grace, he, at the same time, addressed men as reasonable and responsible agents. The choice of God he assumed to be compatible with the choice of man—the purpose to save a people with the voluntary forthputting of all his energies. While the views of the preacher are scriptural, consistent, and occasionally profound, his style and manner give them ample justice. He has an exhaustless and ready command of a nervous, vigorous style. He selects his words with care, or rather they come to him naturally, and he constructs his sentences after the most approved rules of rhetoric. Seldom does style so happily combine the philosophical with the popular. He almost never uses a tautological phrase

or word, and yet he presents his thoughts in a most tangible and telling form. Of this neat terse style is he so completely the master, that in employing it he displays the graces of the orator as well as all the accuracy of the philosopher. His earnestness greatly commends his teachings. Of all things it is the most unnatural to speak the words of eternal life in a cold, perfunctory manner. If the actor frequently works himself into the belief that the scene is real, what shall be thought of those who treat the real as if it were fictitious. The ministers on earth as well as those in heaven should be "flames of fire." We would be first to condemn the wildfire brought to the altar of God, but that is no reason why the true fire should not be brought. Many ministers, in order to avoid extravagance, sink down into tameness and indifference. They calculate the destinies of their hearers with as much coolness as they would solve a problem of Euclid. They describe the glories and the terrors of the other world as if men on earth had no interests whatever beyond those of the present life. Universal vocal nature has a cry of anxiety and alarm, and hence those who never manifest earnestness seem to have shared the gifts of nature as scantily as the gifts of grace. To cry aloud, when the sentiment expressed is vapid and unimpressive, is extravagance—to speak coldly and indifferently, when the matter involves the eternity of men, is infidelity or insensibility. The subject of our sketch deals in such matters, so that his voice requires to be raised, and his language requires to be winged. He deals not in doctrinal discussion—his teaching is thoroughly practical, and often partakes of the direct form. He speaks to his audience, and addresses them pointedly, and his eye seems to follow the sentiments as they reach his people. Not only does he use his voice effectually, but his action is graceful and animated. To the few scanty notes which lie before him he seems to pay no attention. His keen eye appears at once to be fixed on every auditor, while his lifted up hands tell of the inward anxiety. In general his language is chaste, and often highly eloquent. He possesses descriptive powers of a high order, and also a considerable amount of fancy. He reasons well without employing a formal mode of argument, and in appeal he has few superiors.

He silences the objector with a torrent of resistless facts—he encourages the timid with clusters of heavenly promises—he alarms the backsliders with the thunders of Sinai and with the sounds of future woe—he allures the young and the wavering with fascinating descriptions of the beauties of holiness and of the final home of the redeemed. In a word, he speaks a word in season to men of every class, and his messages are sanctioned with an abundant blessing. He has been a useful as well as a popular preacher. In many parts of the country his visits have been productive of much good. Indeed he seldom preaches without visible good being effected. In person he is slender, and of the middle size. With the exception of his eyes, which are keen and penetrating, his countenance is not particularly expressive. His brow is broad rather than high, and his features are mild rather than bold. He appears to be in delicate health, but is always lively and active. He speaks in a slow, soft, and somewhat husky voice, but with great distinctness and emphasis. Every syllable is clearly and accurately pronounced, and his style, with the exception of one or two slight peculiarities, is correct. He reads the Scriptures well, and seemingly under the impression that, if they are to be read at all, they ought to be read carefully. His prayers are evangelical and suitable, and sometimes very long. He is greatly loved by his own people, and popular wherever he goes.

He was ordained in 1837. He came out of the Established Church at the disruption, along with a great part of his people, and has been not only a most efficient minister but an active promoter of the schemes of the Free Church. He is apparently about 35 years of age.

APRIL 15, 1848.

REV. PATRICK BREWSTER,

ABBAY CHURCH, PAISLEY.

HUMAN ambition often foils its own aim. The aspirations of the heart and struggles of the life to gain a certain point may be defeated by the means employed, or even if the end is gained the advantage is questionable. Some men become heroes without desiring it, others never get beyond valets, though struggling all life for it. Fame, honour, and esteem flow to men most readily when uncoveted. Popularity cannot be manufactured by mere perseverance in any particular course, because being the recognition of the multitude, there is no possibility of defining any principles or rules by which it may be acquired. Many men laboriously chase this phantom in every possible aspect, and seek it in every possible position, but rarely find the pursuit avail. They do not become popular, they merely become notorious. This notoriety may be enviable or otherwise. In the case of a pickpocket, for example, doubtless animated by the same wish as the senator, to be thought great by his fellows—his dexterity professionally, in securing him notoriety, secures him also a measure of honour; but had the same individual become distinguished merely for a series of unsuccessful attempts his notoriety would be of the very reverse character. Such is the case with all popularity-hunters. They may become popular, more likely, however, only distinguished. The distinction may be such as to excite applause, it may be such as to call forth ridicule merely. It is matter of regret that the clerical office is not exempt from the illustration of this truth, and we are not sure that we can wholly exclude the subject of our sketch from the

charge. For the last twenty years he has courted popularity, for the last ten he has been notorious. With a dogmatism, an energy, and perseverance worthy of a nobler cause, he has struggled on through the quagmires leading to public favour, but out of these quagmires he has never got into the pure stream. Step by step he has assiduously striven to gain a certain eminence. To one great point have his faculties been directed, on one object concentrated. The plaudits of the mob have been his thirst—the questionable laurels of the crowd's bestowal his desire, and to gain these he has been consistent, energetic, and uniform in his conduct. Whatever that pandered to or most gratified the political tastes of the mob he has advocated. He has studied to be a man of the people. Radicalism and chartism have been his hobbies. On the poor laws and the state of the poor his voice has not been silent. He has raised the cry of oppression and wrong; has dragged out of his own parish cases of neglected poor and held them up to view; has been diligent hunting after such cases, that the poor might be pitted against the rich, where a shilling administered in private would have relieved distress, where a word spoken in the proper quarter could remedy the wrong, he has howled over it till hoarse, and glorified himself in it. To the motley crowds that follow in his train he has enlarged on their wrongs. He has poured out his vials upon kings and governments, and all in authority, save the sovereign people. *Vox populi vox Dei* has been his watchword, the great truth, planet-like, around which all others revolve. He has magnified the people: they have not exalted him. Mr Brewster has been called the people's friend—the poor man's friend. Poor men's friends are too plenty, and too like certain medicines—the blessing they confer is questionable.

Against his sincerity in all his efforts we advance nothing. We rather believe him to be in earnest always—thoroughly self-convinced that he is a patriot—thoroughly possessed of the idea of his own philanthropy, and thoroughly believing everybody in the wrong, and himself in the right, in all matters. We acknowledge his earnestness—unconvincible earnestness in everything—but this militates not against the fact of his being a misguided man with misdirected aims and efforts.

As a preacher, Mr Brewster falls more immediately under our notice than as the political agitator or philanthropist. In the pulpit his appearance is not attractive. There is little indication of that talent for which he is celebrated, in his physiognomy, and little of it in the opening services of the sanctuary. With head drooping on his bosom, and one hand upraised, in a low mumbling voice he utters a prayer. If you are near enough the pulpit you may be edified, if at any distance the utmost stretch of attention is necessary to catch occasional words and sentences. It does not last long however. From his prayers very little idea can be formed regarding him or regarding them in general. What little can be heard, even in a privileged position, is cold, dry, stiff, and formalistic. From these the attention is willingly turned to the discourse which follows. It is in his sermons, and in his sermons alone, that his talent, his ability—critical, scholastic, theological, or otherwise, are displayed. Nothing else that Mr Brewster does is done to such advantage as preaching—nothing done so well as writing sermons. In beauty of style, elegance of construction, fertility of imagination, in a total absence of any redundancy, and in a pure and polished style of composition, he is excelled by few or none of our pulpit orators. As a public speaker he is confused, rambling, never much to the point—often coarse, and never eloquent; but in the pulpit, setting aside a certain stiffness of delivery, and a, by no means, musical voice, his discourses are masterly specimens of composition. Every thought is carefully and distinctly elaborated—every principle clearly laid down—every sentence fully charged, but never confused. There is no affectation of superior scholarship, yet it glistens in every paragraph—no meretricious efforts at effect, yet it never fails of being produced—no hewing around a thought to make it plain, for every thought stands distinct—no forcing in of extraneous matter, and filling up with needless dissertation—all is calm, clear, distinct, appreciable. Framed upon the model of Blair, with less than Blair's eloquence, but more striking and more instructive, Mr Brewster's sermons cannot fail to gratify and interest. They fail, however, to warm, and they fail to melt. Like the glittering icicle, or the clear depths of the blue lake,

they reflect the beauty of the heavens and the glow of sunshine: they draw the gazer's eye and bind his attention, but never bend his inclination towards them. His eloquence may raise delight within the hearer, may gratify the taste, may thrill through every nerve, but will not draw a tear from any eye, or touch the deep springs of any heart. Some of Mr Brewster's admirers have spoken of his genius in no measured terms. We deny the possession of it. Talents he has of a high range, but genius was absent at his birth. We should call him a clever man in the sense we would speak of many popular preachers of the present day; but the mystic light of genius never sparkled in his eye, and those "thoughts that wander through eternity," which genius alone gives birth to, he never uttered.

Mr Brewster's ruling passion is controversy—not theological controversy. His mind is not of a cast to grapple with the depths and intricacies of theology. He is not a subtle thinker by any means, and never would have made a metaphysician. His controversial faculty is of a much lower order than the theologians—a little lower still, we should call it quarrelsome. He delights, revels in dispute. His printed discourses, and many of his delivered ones, are the offspring of dispute. His presbytery speeches and his platform exhibitions are all elicited under the impulse of antagonistic feelings. Yet his gifts for controversy are only one-sided. So far as determination, an utter unconsciousness of defeat, a thorough capacity for brow-beating an adversary, and an illimitable capacity for speech are concerned, he is perfect or nearly so; but he wants vigour, tact, earnestness of manner, and arrangement in extempore efforts. He might talk an adversary down; he could scarcely reason him silent. He could speak an impartial hearer asleep before he would convince him. He could worry an adversary out of temper, but scarcely win him to his side. He could demolish an argument with abuse easier than expose a fallacy. Unlike Andrew Thomson, to whom some have compared him, he is utterly destitute of wit or irony. He can pelt an adversary with mud, but the stinging shafts of satire or the light-feathered arrow of wit he cannot wield. There is not a particle of genuine humour in him. A good, hearty laugh he

could not utter, nor, save by some blunder, create one in another. Yet, withal, Mr Brewster has a crowd of followers. His preaching talent attracts the learned, his patriotism the mob. The most remarkable extremes meet within the dimly-lighted old Abbey, on a Sabbath, to listen to him. His politics attract many satellites, his preaching some admirers. They are of two classes. By both, we believe, with his views of the Christian ministry, he deals honestly and conscientiously—the rich are not flattered and the poor not scorned.

As an author, his small volume of *Chartist Discourses*, published in vindication, when brought under temporary suspension by his presbytery, is well known. Of their literary merits much elsewhere has been said. Of other merit they possess but little. He is besides, we believe, author of some excellent articles published, some years since, in a *Cyclopædia* edited by his brother, Sir David Brewster, and a number of other stray productions.

He has been a clergyman for about 30 years. The Abbey, Paisley, is a collegiate charge—the parish is the largest and most densely populated in the district, and stands in need of all the labour and attention Mr Brewster and his colleague can bestow on it.

AUGUST 12, 1848.

REV. JAMES TAYLOR, D.D.,

RENFIELD STREET UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

THOUGH the principles of a levelling communism are professed but by a very small and uninfluential section of British society, countenance is often unwittingly lent to them by mistaken views of the principles and precepts of Christianity. Many have inferred from the self-denying doctrines of the Christian faith, that affluence and ease are incompatible with discipleship. On account of the woes attached to unsanctified riches they have treated riches as a species of moral evil, and the rich as far from the kingdom of heaven. Because the early disciples were "afflicted and destitute," they infer that Christians in all ages should choose a humble position, and live by sufferance rather than by right. On account of the snares connected with wealth they recommend that disciples should give all to God, and trust his providence for a supply of their future wants. These views have erected and peopled monasteries and nunneries—they have made not a few Christians heartless cumberers of society and spread a pestiferous influence over the activities of life—over the social circle and over the church of the living God. They, who hold them, cannot conceive how that man who lives in his mansion and fares sumptuously can be a Christian, when so many are pinched for the necessities of life. They cannot understand how that family who attire so gaily and follow the secularities of life so keenly can belong to the family of God; and they doubt whether the congregation that erects a gorgeous temple has yet learned of him who when on earth had no where to lay his head! It may, however, be questioned whether this

spirit that looks so humble and self-denying is after all the spirit of the gospel. If Christianity forbid riches to its professors, what mean the many precepts laid down for the guidance of rich disciples? If equality of rank be one of its principles, even the blessings and promises addressed to the poor are meaningless, for when equality is secured all might be poor, but none would be comparatively so. In fact this humble spirit is often the most hateful that can infest the Christian church. It early made its appearance, and will continue probably as long as a state of imperfection. Judas was its first disciple, and, as such, grudged the ointment poured on the head of Christ, and argued it might have been better bestowed on the poor. His followers, or those of the Judas school, when they see any unusual display of liberality are ready to point out a thousand ways the gift might have been more judiciously bestowed. The fact is, the spirit, if general, would soon render gifts impossible, for it would speedily reduce Christian society to an equality, and that one more in need of gifts than able to bestow them. It is also observable that while those who possess this spirit are so eloquent on the duties and responsibilities of others, they either have nothing of their own to bestow or their alms are indeed secret—so secret that no eye—not that of heaven—sees them. They love, but it is in word—they are economists, but no one profits by their economy—they are the only philanthropists, but the world has not been bettered by their deeds. There are certain events which draw forth the manifestations of this spirit. If a large gift is bestowed to support and extend foreign missions, it is alleged home is neglected. If a large sum is expended on a place of worship, it is alleged the money spent in its erection would have provided places for a large portion of our destitute poor. It is well, however, to bring theory to the test of facts. In this case facts prove that the congregation best housed is the one that does most to provide churches for others. Besides, what reason is there that those who dwell in ceiled houses should worship God in a house which costs them nothing? What precept—what principle—forbids Christians to worship in a church according to their means? Is it any reason why the rich should worship in a humble erection, because the poor

must meet in one less imposing ? Are communism and equality less hateful and less destructive in Christianity than it would be in trade or commerce ? It is the glory of Christianity that it is adapted to men of every class of mind, and in every class of society, and we have yet to learn that its design or tendency is to produce equality of intellect or condition. Theorists may talk as they please, but the man forgiven much will love much. Three hundred pence will be thrown into the treasury by the really grateful Christian, when three pence will be grudged by the man of cold heart and of cold theory. The rich man who knows and feels that he owes all to religion, can scarcely be blamed for contributing willingly and largely to the erection of a temple in which to worship God. Indeed, religionists are greatly behind in this particular. Men of pleasure expend much more of their substance to gratify their taste than the man of God expends on that to which he owes all his present comfort and future hopes. Little do they know the temporal advantages of a gospel ministry who grudge its cost. In keeping of God's commands there is a present reward ; and to none of his commands are there surer blessings annexed than to the support of a gospel ministry. A liberal congregation is a prosperous congregation. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." Our thoughts were turned into the above channel by visiting the church in Renfield street which was opened for worship last Sabbath. Whatever may be said to the contrary, we can see no reason why the house dedicated to the service of God should be less gorgeous, when the circumstances warrant, than the house erected for merchandise or amusement. Christians understand now well enough the unmeritorious character of mere show and form in the service of God ; but that is no reason why the house of God should not be comfortable, or even magnificent. We know how to despise the "helps to devotion" which ignorance and superstition have devised ; but we also know that one comfortably accommodated is likely to be in a better frame for acceptable worship than one placed in physical discomfort. Besides, we know not why the free-will offerings of a people should not be more than able to cope with privileged sects even in the article of churches.

Man, when placed in a true position, can work wonders compared with the privileged man in a false position. We say, then, to our wealthy churches, Despise the calculations of grumblers—erect such places of worship as your means can afford. Let the place where you worship God—where every good principle is strengthened, where every evil desire is crucified, where you are nerved for the activities of life and religion—be not inferior to your place of business. Though Jehovah hates robbery for burnt offering, the penurious are more likely to be the robbers than those who devise liberal things. Let the world see that you value your Christianity by paying for its maintenance. They do well still in whose heart it is to build a house for the worship of God. While God can be worshipped in a barn or in a hole of a rock, he still chooses Zion, and all places built for his honour he comes to bless.

This fine erection was opened for worship last Sabbath. It was opened by the venerable Dr John Brown of Edinburgh, who preached in the forenoon. The minister of the church preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. Wm. Anderson of this city preached in the evening.

At two o'clock afternoon the pastor of the church entered the pulpit, and gave out as subject of praise the 122d Psalm. After reading the 1st chap. of 1st Cor., verses of the 18th Paraphrase were sung. At 25 minutes to three, 1 Cor. iii. 16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" was read as subject of discourse.

The introduction to the discourse was brief and appropriate. The gradual revelation of the Divine character to man was finely adumbrated by the painter's progress. The first dim lines, almost meaningless to every eye but that of the artist, were made the figures of the first revelations given to the patriarchs and prophets, and the finished picture, which a child could understand, very strikingly shadowed forth the full effulgence of the Divine glory as seen in the face of Jesus, as well as the more dim revelation God makes of himself through the church, which is his temple. Besides the beautiful figure employed, the exordium graphically opened up the subject. It made believers stand forth in their highest character as the

residence of Deity, and the medium through which He reveals himself to men. The four divisions not only exhausted the text, but gave a very succinct review of its different doctrines and duties. The foundation, the materials, the erection, and design, well expressed the ideas which the preacher elaborated. Indeed, the views of the preacher included both the individual and collective meanings of the "temple" in the text, as the character of each separate part of the temple, as well as of the collective whole, was kept prominently in view. In discussing the "foundation," the preacher gave a very full and concise view of the person and work of Christ, and that he is not only the foundation and corner-stone, but the centre and source of all saving influence. Under the second head, the materials—man as a fallen and redeemed sinner—was ably portrayed; and on the third head—the erection—God the Father was represented as occupying an important part in the building of mercy, while the last head, "the design of the building" as an habitation of God, and as a means of reflecting the Divine glory, gave the preacher an admirable opportunity, which he duly improved, of turning the discourse to practical account. The only defect of the discourse was that it included too much sentiment to allow of popular demonstration. If, however, that exuberance of fancy which allures and fascinates was not observable, the want was amply compensated by the strong and vigorous views given of the leading doctrines of the gospel. Indeed, the discourse contained an admirable epitome of the entire scheme of redemption, both objectively and subjectively considered. The Scriptures were largely quoted, not to support fanciful speculations, but to show that the gospel rests, not on the testimony of man but on the power of God.

The theology of the preacher is of a healthful and scriptural character. He takes no partial view of favourite texts but preaches the whole word, and even when discussing topics calculated to provoke to party controversy, he proceeds with his discourse, knowing nothing but the truth in its own native grandeur. In discussing the great foundation, for instance, he says nothing of a limited or of a universal atonement, but satisfies himself with teaching it as Christ and his apostles taught it, and leaves verbal metaphysics to others. In dis-

cussing the fall of man, he does not deem it necessary to qualify anything the Scriptures assert, but teaches the doctrine with that freedom which characterises holy writ. He is as far removed as possible from a mere verbal wrangler. He is a man of ideas expressed in nervous style, and with a definite end. He not only takes a hearty grasp of the facts with which he deals, but he classifies and arranges them so as to be able to generalise and infer with great fairness and precision. He founds not a doctrine on an insulated text, but on the consistent meaning of all the texts which treat of it. This feature saves him from those crotchets which delight little minds, and which at the same time leads them into contradiction and absurdity. He insists on Christian duties, not because he can deduce them from some insulated passage, but because he finds they are clearly taught in the principles and examples as well as in the precepts of the Bible.

The manner of the preacher does great justice to his views. He can speak fluently as well as think vigorously. His language is strong, nervous, and perspicacious. It is alike remarkable for its force and finish. He possesses much ease in speaking, and though he seldom uses notes, he never hesitates nor stumbles. On the platform he is exceedingly happy, and commands the heartiest applause of the enthusiastic meeting. On the recent educational discussion he took a prominent part, and even those who differed from his views of a national education, could not but admire the intelligence and the fervour with which he advocated them. His voice, though somewhat soft, when used on a low key, possesses much variety and power, and finishes a climax with thrilling effect. Indeed, for producing an impression on a promiscuous meeting, he is second to none. Though he has been but a short time in our city, he is favourably known, by his public appearances, among all classes of the community. His speeches and discourses, too, are not of the clap-trap superficial character now too fashionable, but they teem with facts and arguments. Indeed, his mind is more argumentative than imaginative. He seldom strikes out what would be called new trains of thought, but he combines and arranges with great skill. The mathematical precision with which he builds up an argument is almost in-

compatible with a vivid imagination. Even when his logic is on fire, it is not so much the novelty of his illustrations as the vigour and fervour of his language that attracts an audience. He is a distinct and emphatic speaker. Every word tells, and every thought is transparent. His views may be doubted or denied, but they cannot be mistaken. He is utterly free of the mystic, and teaches only what he understands. His manner is generally animated and energetic. There is no falling off of the voice, but he sustains it properly to the end of every separate paragraph, and to the end of his discourse. On the occasion in question he rose as he proceeded with his subject, till towards the close he poured forth a flood of impassioned eloquence.

His frank and open manner enhances his popularity. He possesses none of that false dignity which many consider part of clerical insignia. He is easy of access, and listens to the proposals of the meanest with deference and respect. He is utterly free of that petty jealousy which sorely besets many in his office. He does not reckon a cause essentially bad because he is not the author of it, nor does he refuse to co-operate in works of charity, though a first place may not be assigned him. He works when he is wished, and, where he is wished, willingly and cheerfully. He also possesses that hope which knows no impossibilities. He proceeds to the most difficult undertakings, never doubting but they can be brought to a happy issue. He is no theorist, but what his hand finds to do he does with all his might. Nor is there aught obtrusive or forbidding in his conduct. Among his fathers and brethren in the church courts he has always kept his place as a comparatively young man. Great as is his zeal, it is tempered with knowledge and discretion. He watches his time and opportunity, and urges his views so as to excite no unkindly or envious feeling. In an earlier stage of his life than usual he received the highest honours of one of our Scottish universities, and is called Rabbi ere he has well entered on the full powers of his manhood. In a word, we consider him one of the most useful clergymen of his time. There may be young ministers more erudite, but none are more zealous, more active, more enterprising, more liberal, or more amiable. We calculate, should

he see many days, on a life of great activity and great usefulness, should he retain that confidence in himself which is essential to success. His present position is one in which it is difficult to retain the balance of the intellectual and moral powers. On the one hand there is much to excite gratitude and fire ambition, and, on the other, there may be not a little to discourage and depress. He is more than a match for circumstances, should he maintain that equanimity that refuses to be elated or cast down by aught which this scene can threaten or indulge.

Dr Taylor is a native of Berwickshire, and was educated in the University of Edinburgh, where he received many tokens of the approbation of the professors, and where he carried off the highest honours. About two years ago, the *Senatus* of St Andrew's University conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. He was first settled in St Andrew's in 1839, and about four months before the death of the late able Dr Heugh, he was chosen to be his co-pastor in 1846. He continued to minister to that congregation till last Sabbath, when, with the consent of all concerned, he removed, along with 400 members and 13 elders, to form a new congregation in the beautiful and spacious church just finished in Renfield street. He received an excellent start there last Sabbath, and a career of prosperity and honour is, we trust, before him and his enterprising people. We have no doubt but if health is granted, Dr Taylor will live till even the dimensions of this spacious edifice are too narrow for the host into which his four hundred will multiply.

His literary labours deserve honourable mention. He contributed largely to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and he has also been a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*.

Aug. 19, 1848.

REV. JOHN W. BORLAND,

GILLESPIE CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THOUGH there is, probably, too much stereotyped theology among preachers, there is still great variety in their ministrations. One class of them discourses largely of the privileges of Christianity; another of its doctrines; and a third, of its duties. If texts are not chosen on account of the support they lend to particular views, they must at least allow the preacher, whatever be their natural and obvious meaning, to deduce his favourite theories from them. Among the class who descant on Christian privileges, there is a great variety. Some of them refer chiefly to external privileges—a Christian land—a land of Bibles and sanctuaries—a land where liberty of conscience is enjoyed, and where Christianity can be professed without loss of goods or reputation. Others of the “privilege” class take a somewhat more spiritual view of Christian privilege, and dwell on the advantages of Church fellowship—of Christian sympathy and affection—of the benefits of prayer and of public ordinances—of the peace and joy and hopes which the gospel brings, and of the heaven which it opens before the believer, when he has finished his earthly career. Others of this class dwell on the benefits that flow from adoption into the family of God—of the relationships believers sustain to God, to Christ, and to a holy and happy universe, and of the witness every believer has in himself that he is a true Christian. The doctrinal class also exhibits considerable variety. Some preach what may be called the essential doctrines—such as the degeneracy of man—the nature of the atonement—the work of the Spirit—the nature of regeneration, and the progress of sanctification.

Others dive into the abstract and mysterious. They deal extensively in the divine purposes—they perplex themselves with the nature of election, and struggle to determine the antecedent and the consequent, and to draw laws and make distinctions which the most acute metaphysician cannot discover. The “duty” class exhibit probably still greater variety. A part of them have not a very high standard of duty. They insist chiefly on church going—on charity giving—on doing justice and loving mercy. They plead for the fatherless and the widow, and recommend the decencies and respectabilities of life, with a laudable perseverance. Others of them urge duties which respect God as creator, preserver, benefactor, and judge. They recommend that he should be feared and served, and that his commandments should be obeyed and his laws respected. Others of them go still higher, and teach duties emphatically Christian. They urge repentance toward God, and faith toward Christ. They recommend the cultivation of a spirit of humility, forbearance, kindness, and long suffering. Now, all these classes teach much that is important and true, and probably nothing that is wrong; but the great tendency of the preaching of the day is to degenerate into mere theological discussion. Theology and religion, though inseparably associated in some minds, have often no real connexion. There may be much correct theology in a man’s creed, and no religion in his heart; and, on the other hand, the man who knows little of dogmatic theology may possess genuine religion. Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones would not be greatly misapplied to much of the theology of our day. In the valley of vision there are very many bones, and they are unquestionably very dry. Some preachers have the art of making the doctrines that should chiefly affect the heart mere materials of thought. Even the doctrines of the cross in their hands appear dry as a geometrical problem. The savour of Christianity they extract, and leave the naked outline. The theology of the preacher whose name heads these remarks, stands out in favourable contrast to that specified. The symmetry of it is as complete, but it has also life in it. As he preaches, flesh comes up on the bones, and skin covers it, and life is infused. He preaches the doctrines and the privileges

and the duties of Christianity, each in their due proportion, and all with a practical aspect. He deals little in the abstract, and seldom enters on dogmatic theology. In his hands doctrines have another end to serve than to sustain a place in some cumbrous system—they present truth to the mind and objects to the heart. The privileges of the Christian are not introduced for mere inspection or for idle contemplation—privilege in his hands is coupled with responsibility. As he exhibits to his hearers the glorious liberty and dignity of the Christian, he never omits to remind them how much they owe to their Lord. But it is when duty comes before him, either in the form of command or example that he excels. The duties he inculcates are pre-eminently Christian—Christian in their motives, character, and results. He asks his hearers not what they omit that others do, but what they do more than others. He makes no attempt to make a duty less important than it appears in the sacred record, by comparing the altered circumstances of the Christian now with what they were in primitive times.

Last Sabbath forenoon, at five minutes past eleven, the Rev. Mr Borland commenced his usual public services in his own church. After the 2d Paraphrase was sung, the 29th chapter of Job was read. A few remarks were made on the chapter. The remarks occupied about ten minutes. Prayer was then offered, which occupied about twenty minutes. After a few verses had been very well sung, Acts i. 12—14, were read as subject of lecture. We cannot make room for an outline of the discourse, which was concluded at twenty-six minutes past twelve, having occupied about thirty-six minutes. After prayer, praise, and the benediction, the congregation was dismissed at twenty minutes to one. The prayers were devout, earnest, and suitable, and the entire service was well-proportioned and unexceptionable. The discourse enforced one idea—the duty and privilege of united prayer. That idea was brought out scripturally, historically, argumentatively, and practically. The example of united prayer, narrated in the passage which formed the subject of discourse, was admirably placed before the people. The number, the character, the spirit, and the object of the primitive disciples, were fairly eli-

cited from the verses, and after exhibiting that example in every possible light, the lecturer proceeded inferentially, and deduced that what was good for the disciples of Jerusalem is good for disciples still. He confused not his hearers with abstractions regarding the motive of acceptable prayer—he insisted only on the duty; and by the example of the early disciples, and also by the example of some at the present day, as well as by the direct authority of the author of Christianity, he proved at once the duty and the privilege of united prayer. This one discourse serves as a key to allow us access to the leading mental features of the subject of our sketch. As we have already said, he is anxious to impress the leading idea that the passage, on which he discourses, contains. What a variety of topics could a theological speculator not elicit from the text? We should have had from such a description of Jerusalem—of the Mount of Olivet—a Sabbath-day's journey—the *locale* of the upper room—the characteristics of the apostles named—the difference between prayer and supplication—the characteristics of the mother and brethren of Jesus! In the hands of the subject of our sketch, the passage contains one idea, and one only. He may casually refer to some or all of the ideas mentioned, but never so as to conceal his one idea—his united, harmonious, earnest, and importunate prayer meeting. We need not remind our readers that such was the manner of the prince of Scottish preachers, the lamented Chalmers, and such a method has much to commend it. The hearers of such may not be so well versed in detail as some are, but they get a permanent hold of important and influential ideas. They may not marvel at the variety elicited from a text, but they will be certain of one thing at least—the thing needful. Such preachers may not condescend to describe every gem and ornament of the spiritual temple, but its goodly proportions, its impregnable bulwarks, and its permanent glory, will be engraved on their minds with an iron pen. His style is beautifully simple, terse, and finished. He is not satisfied with speaking grammatically and intelligibly, he must speak rhetorically and effectively. He takes care to do as little violence to the ear as to the taste, and none to either. While his diction is terse and strong, it is also smooth and oratorical.

His voice is sharp and musical, and is alike pleasant on its highest and lowest key. Though its whispers are audible, it occasionally swells into great power, but even then it is under the most perfect control. His features are sharp and intellectual, and his gestures are natural and animated. We consider him one of the most effective and most graceful of our young preachers. His preaching belongs to a refined and intellectual class, and, at the same time, it has nothing of the cold and classic stateliness which belongs to some of our intellectual preachers. Indeed his voice expresses at once the pathetic and the vigorous—the sweet and the awful. His success as a preacher has been all that his most ardent friends could desire. Not a great many years ago, he commenced to preach to a mere handful, and that handful has now increased into one of our most respectable congregations. About three years ago, we had the happiness of noticing, at some length, the very handsome place of worship they erected in Great Hamilton Street, and now that erection is respectably filled. We may be mistaken, but we have long entertained the idea that a congregation just formed possesses peculiar interest. They appear, in the beauties of holiness, like the dew of the morning. They sing, and pray, and hear, with an earnestness and devoutness which we have not elsewhere noticed. This is specially true as long as the congregation remains under the care of him whose plastic hand formed it, and whose fostering care reared it. Such a congregation possesses much of the ardour, and energy, and enterprise of youth, and under judicious guidance it exhibits a most lovely aspect. They feel themselves knit to one another, and especially to their pastor. In the cases of others the people feel the gratitude due to one who feeds his flock, but in this there is the additional gratitude of gathering them together. Even when the selection is not so choice as desirable, much of the feeling we have described is evident, but in this case it is evidently the anxiety of the minister to gather men not merely nominally but really into the fold of Christ. If the purity of a people is in proportion to the searching character of the preaching to which they listen, then beyond all doubt that of this congregation must stand high. He is not in the habit of say-

ing, "Peace, peace," but, on the contrary, arouses the nominal professor by the most urgent appeals, and directs to the true source of peace through the great atonement. Such being the character of his preaching, the inference is that he will not only gather a numerous but a devout people around him. Many will feel that they owe all their present comfort and their future hopes to his ministrations, and, as a matter of course, their love will be strong and their gratitude peculiar. We trust they express these feelings not in word only, but in deed and in truth. The feeling that does not reach the pocket is not very religious. It is long since John condemned "the word and tongue" love which early seized professed disciples, and preachers still feel the effects of this cheap manifestation. The practical answer many give to the question, How much owest thou thy minister? is not particularly creditable in many instances, but we cannot but suppose that this is an exception. The man that gathers and feeds a people deserves more than lip gratitude.

Mr Borland is a native of this city. His studies were pursued, first at the Grammar School (now the High School), which was at that time entirely a classical institution, then at our University for the usual period, and finally at Paisley, in the Divinity Hall of the Relief Synod, then under the superintendence of the revered and lamented Dr Thomson. From his earliest years he sat under the ministry of the late Rev. Mr Thomson of Hutchesontown. He was licensed to preach by the Glasgow Relief Presbytery in 1834; was ordained over the first Relief Church, Lanark, in June, 1836, where he remained eight years, and was translated to his present charge in September, 1844. After worshipping in the hall of the Mechanics' Institution, Calton, for upwards of twelve months, the congregation entered their present elegant church in Great Hamilton street in September, 1845. The membership was under 150 when Mr Borland was called. It is now more than three times that number.

SEPTEMBER 9, 1848.

REV. JOHN CAIRD, M.A.,

LADY YESTER'S, EDINBURGH.

IN the year 1846, the death of the Rev. Archibald Bennie, D.D., threw a gloom over the Scottish metropolis scarcely less dense than the death of the eminent Dr A. Thomson, a few years previous. The congregations to which these eminent men ministered have long occupied a proud intellectual and religious pre-eminence in Edinburgh, and, according to general opinion, there are but few able to please and edify them. In 1846 it was the opinion of many in the Establishment that it would be difficult to find a clergyman who would be generally acceptable to the congregation of Lady Yester's. One of the most distinguished rabbis and successful authors of that church, on being asked his opinion of who was the coming man, said that he had his eye on one, but he was merely a boy, and he did not like even to suggest him, lest people should merely smile at the idea as absurd. On being urged, he said he would name the Rev. John Caird, then in the Parliamentary Church, Newton-on-Ayr. We know not how far this suggestion determined the matter; but, all events, the Rev. John Caird was speedily called to Edinburgh, and has since then ministered there with general acceptance, and with almost unexampled popularity. His fame, in Edinburgh, has been much more rapidly acquired than that of any other minister, and it is a question whether the sensation created by his ministrations is not equal to that caused by a Candlish or a Guthrie, or even by a Chalmers, in Glasgow, in former days. Though in many cases we would not be inclined to infer much in favour of a minister because the world is at his heels, yet in this case popu-

larity must be allowed to be presumptive proof of the superiority of the speaker. The congregation to which he ministers is not, and never has been, afflicted with itching ears that will hear nothing but the new or the strange. It is proverbial for its intelligence, its piety, and sobriety, and anything like extravagance could not expect a very warm reception there. It is also to be noticed that those who crowd to the church, besides the usual sitters, are most of them of the well-educated and well-informed classes. Here, then, we have a young clergyman (boyish, indeed, in his appearance), week after week collecting the *elite* of Edinburgh, notwithstanding the great number of eloquent preachers in that city—the city of a Candlish, a Guthrie, a Gordon, a French, a Muir, and an Alexander—and ought not this fact to secure for the remarks we are about to make a candid reception, and prevent those who would otherwise dismiss them as extravagant, from such rash conclusions? We shall, first of all, give a brief outline of his discourse and address of last Sabbath. Last Sabbath he officiated for the much-esteemed Dr Barr, of this city, who has been laid aside from his usual labours by protracted illness. At twenty-five minutes to twelve he gave out as his text Matthew xi. 25, “At that time Jesus said, I thank thee, O Father,” &c., “because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes.” The preacher commenced by inquiring as to the time referred to in the text—“At that time.” It was in an hour during which he had reviewed his ministry and contemplated the inveteracy and rebellion of those to whom he had delivered many messages of love. He had just pronounced the doom of Chorasin and other cities that had rejected his ministry. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit. The time seems exceedingly unsuitable for joy, unless, indeed, we suppose that by a sudden transition of thought and feeling, he had left off to think of the waywardness of men, and returned in thought to heaven to contemplate the glory he had before the world was, and rejoice with his Father as he had rejoiced always before the foundations of the earth were laid. Was it, then, such a transition from grief to gladness—from earth to heaven? No, the present scene is still before him. The subject was as little calculated to give joy as the time. The very subject that

had chafed his meek spirit into such bitter invective, (see the verses preceding the text,) is before him when in ecstasy of joy he says, I thank thee, O Father, &c. Unquestionably this subject must at the time have been viewed by Jesus in some peculiar light, when it produced this sweet tranquillity and joy in his mind, and we shall at present direct attention to some of the reasons which calmed the mind of Jesus as he surveyed the comparative non-success of his ministry among men. The reasons are three. First, a simple acquiescence in his Father's will. He adds, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." To a creature merely human, nothing could have been more mortifying than the way men received Christ's instructions. There was little in the character or number of those who became his disciples to satisfy those who look on success after the manner of men. He rests with confidence on God. As the voyager on the ocean, who knows the barque is guided by a skilful pilot, feels secure amid the storm; as the infant reposes on its mother's bosom, so does the mighty soul of Jesus on the love of his Father as he says, I thank thee, O Father, &c. The second reason of this happy state of mind was, that the economy of redemption made all the glory of salvation redound to God alone. See 27th verse. "All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father," &c. As if he had said, I thank thee, Father, because in the application of redemption, as well as in its objective provisions, God is all in all. The third and final reason of this joy of Christ was, such an arrangement provided that the reception of the gospel did not depend on gifts, or any peculiarity which belongs only to a class of men—not to those who possessed eminent gifts, as these are but few—not to the possessors of genius, for these are fewer still. Any such restriction would have robbed the gospel of that universality in which Christ rejoices. "Come to me *all* ye who labour" is Christ's language. I thank thee, Father, that the gospel thus meets the case of all—I thank thee that it requires no peculiar qualifications which the few only possess, but that it is adapted to man as such. All that it requires is a conviction of guilt, and a desire to be freed from its condemnation; all, be they wise or foolish in man's estimation, are welcome do they

but desire salvation. We have been obliged to leave out the illustrations of the above three particulars, as well as the concluding remarks.

The sermon was over at 25 minutes past 12, having occupied about 50 minutes. After a few verses were sung, the preacher commenced to "fence the tables." He said that he wished to say something that might be useful to those about to partake of the holy communion. That ordinance was more than a memorial of Christ's sufferings—it was a banquet for Christ's friends. It is to be observed, however, that food can afford nutriment to the living only. A feast may be spread before the moveless forms of the dead, but they cannot partake. Can you who are about to partake of this holy communion reckon yourselves alive to God? He that hath the Son hath life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation. Let each ask, are there indications of spiritual life in me, or is all this ordinance to be merely the wretched mimicry of a death feast? The principle of life is hidden and mysterious. Even the principle of natural life is hidden from all men. No one can say what life is, and yet the signs of life are innumerable. I mention two of these. Life is free and unconstrained in its motions. The motions of life are not carried on mechanically, but freely and unconsciously. Action is easy and delightful to the man who enjoys life. He relishes his food, and eats not by constraint. The sickly appetite loathes food and requires to be urged, but high health partakes with zest. How does the test affect you? Do you feel the motions of spiritual life? Is there a flow towards God of all the best affections of the soul? Does your mind of itself flow out towards God? If you love any one you do not need to set yourself to think of him. Though distant, the object of your affections is still near. Worldly men's thoughts are in their business even when they are present at the ordinances of religion. Do your thoughts go out after God when you are engaged in the duties of life? Do your affections, even when you are impressed with the concerns of time, wander away to God? Do you relish the food of the soul? You would be alarmed if ye loathed your daily food, and are you equally alarmed when the word of God is not sweet to your

taste? What if you feel you do not love God?—that you do not breathe naturally in the atmosphere of religion. These things augur ill for you, and suggest that you must be barren trees, that bear no fruit. On the other hand, do you feel that yours is the step, and the pulse, and the vigour of living men? Can you say with David, How sweet to my taste are thy words! My soul breaketh for the longing it hath for thy judgments; a day spent in thy courts is better than a thousand. Christ addresses such when he says, “If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.” But lest some be discouraged on account of the absence of emotion in the service of God, let me add, 2dly, That life is a steady, constant, continuous principle. Life is in no case an intermittent thing. A plant *continues* to grow; our physical frame reaches the stature of man by steady perseverance. So with spiritual life. Some professing Christians are devout on the Sabbath. They are alive to God and to Christ by profession on that day, but dead all the other days. Their religion is fitful—the atmosphere is its emblem—now cloud, now sunshine. This is not like life. I do not ask if you worship God in your families. Such a question, in your present position, would be an insult even to your common honesty; but I ask, Are yours the movements of life, or those of the mere automaton? Does your religion pervade your life, or is it only a thing of Sabbath? What do you to please Christ? Does your religion make you more honest, more honourable, more just, more amiable, more kind? Does it make you better servants and masters, parents and children, husbands and wives? We must hold *that* religion very cheap which does not influence the life. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Temporary feeling or emotion may deceive, but a life of holiness never. If you can say that such is yours, we welcome you to the table. Come soldiers of the cross—come the faintest and feeblest as well as the strongest. The ark rests for you, the pillar of cloud stands still. Come one, come all—Jehovah waits to commune with his people from above the mercy-seat.

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in the countenance, in the gestures, in the language, in the power and influence of the preacher. Without notes before him, he proceeds with an ease and eloquence certainly astonishing for one so young. His language is generally flowing, rich, and sparkling. The didactic parts are enunciated comparatively slowly, and in a low voice, but as he proceeds in his illustration his utterance becomes more rapid, and his style more eloquent. In laying down the outline of his discourse, he displays great self-possession and ease, and after repeating the fact he means to prove on the principle he designs to elucidate, he commences discussion, and illustration succeeds illustration, till his fact or principle stands out in full view, irradiated as with rays from the excellent glory. It is a remarkable fact, that the more rapid is his utterance—the more impassioned his manner, the more chaste and eloquent is his language. The tempest of eloquence is as much his element as was the prophetic afflatus the inspiration of the seers of old. He is the child of feeling, of poesy, of passion. He cannot move in paths which ordinary men have trodden, but marks a way for himself. Tame didactic speaking is not his forte. He cannot walk, but flies on eagles' wings, and his flight is graceful and even majestic. His gestures are animated, and in the best taste. They are never more, and never less animated than his subject. He is probably the most natural of the impassioned pulpit orators of the day. There is no extravagance, no affectation, no pedantry about him; but his body seems to move with his soul, as if they were but one piece. We mentioned lately of a great English orator, that his soul seems to have taken possession of a body not designed for it—but here we have the most perfect harmony. Every movement of his body is in perfect keeping with the energy of his thought. He sustains attention from first to last, though there are few overwhelming outbursts. The most thrilling piece of his discourse was as he finished his illustration of his first head of discourse, when he spoke of the great soul of Christ reposing on the bosom of his Father, and resting in his love and wisdom; but his sermon was, from end to end, a climax—rising, as he proceeded, till it terminated in the sublime. The address he delivered was one of very great excellence. While he had

no notes before him when preaching, he read his address, or at least had full notes of it before him. He seems to feel the solemnity of the occasion, and carefully prepared what he meant to say, lest in a moment of excitement he might discourage the believer or encourage the presumptuous. The conduct of the preacher formed a favourable contrast with that of those ministers who address their people at the table of the Lord without any premeditation, and who say harsh and unwarranted things, the tendency of which is only evil. The address of Mr Caird was judicious as well as careful. He laid hold on great principles. He wished to see the tree good, and affirmed its fruit would be also good.

Mr Caird's conduct in the pulpit is utterly free of flippancy and conceit. No one thinks of despising his youth. He is an example to believers in word and deportment. Mr Caird is a native of Greenock, and spent a considerable number of his earlier years in that town. After finishing his university and divinity studies, he was ordained in 1845. After officiating a short period in Newton-on-Ayr, he was presented by the City Council of Edinburgh to the congregation of Lady Yester's in 1846, and has been one of the Edinburgh city clergy since. About five months ago he was presented to the parish of Errol, and despite the remonstrances of his present congregation, he has determined to remove to that country place, where his salary will be little more than half its present amount, and where great part of the population are attached to the Free Church. The precarious state of his health is his plea for the step he has taken.

APRIL 14, 1849.

REV. DAVID YOUNG, D.D.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PERTH.

DOCTORSHIPS have of late become the most common and contemptible of distinctions. We were glancing the other day at the list of some Presbyteries, and were amused at the thick and clustering D.D.'s—scarce a name but was so signalised. We rubbed our forehead, and began to inquire what those dignitaries had done for their honours? what works they had written? what overwhelming impression made upon the public? But, perhaps, owing to a treacherous memory, we could not recollect anything of the kind. The D.D. annexed to some of their names seemed as absurd an appendix as were a feather stuck into the hat of a plain and portly divine. What a set of wicked wags, we thought, must our Universities be, to turn a number of decent excellent men into ridicule, by painting their faces for them, and sending them out unwitting of the ludicrous outrage! We have all heard of the painter who required to write under his pictures, "This is a lion." Many of our modern divines would need a paper placard inscribed on their backs, "This is a Doctor of Divinity." While thus musing, the almanac still in our hands, we fell into a dream—"a vision of the night"—and fancied we saw a number of pilgrims moving along under heavy burdens, which, we were informed, were degrees. One, under the pressure, was supporting himself on old college certificates. A second was staying his tottering steps on a pile of tiny productions, which bore no "comparative estimate" to the weight of his load. A third, of peculiar weakness, had borrowed his father's crutch, and was moving on with a sort of graceful languor and feeble

elegance. A fourth, with a roguish twinkling eye, and large grey whiskers, was shrugging his shoulders, now eyeing his burden with a look of ironical terror, and now glancing round with bursts of laughter at his fellow-sufferers. A fifth, with *two* burdens on his back, held in his hand, as his sole support, a quarto volume, which bore the inscription, "Encyclopedia Britannica." A sixth, walking apart, holding his head high, indicating by his every attitude, "I am a man of genius," appeared helping forward his ambitious and uneasy steps, with the aid of a small bookling. We noticed that the burdens were of different kinds—some bearing the title of American, and others of Scottish, University degrees, the latter being the heavier of the two. We overheard one, peculiarly heavy laden, saying, with assumed complacency, as he *hirpled* on, "I have purchased to myself a good degree." And most wonderful of all, we saw several, *unburdened*, looking with envy at the poor sufferers, now roaring out for loads, and now asking, *sotto voce*, at the burdened, when, where, and for how much they had bought their bondage.

"We awoke, and lo, it was a dream!" But thus much more of it we remember—we did not see Dr Young among those pilgrims. For, though he bears a degree, he does it with ease. He is, what his title denotes him, a Doctor of Divinity, intimately acquainted with that noble science, truly a master in Israel. Amid all our "Scottish Clergy," we have sketched hitherto few greater or better men.

Dr Young's leading faculty is strong common sense, and his chief acquirement is a knowledge of theology. His principal accomplishment is knowledge of human nature—his chief power is manly eloquence, and his highest sphere is the desk. In these we propose to find texts for the remarks which follow.

Common sense, called so, as *lucus a non lucendo*, because so rare, is not so uncommon as to need to be defined. Inferior to Reason and Genius, it is a higher faculty than Logic and Talent. It has been called the brain in the hand. It is a clear, direct, and instinctive perception of what is true. It is the faculty not so much of the philosopher, or poet, as of the man. Dr Young, from his possession of this, may be called a natural sage, the first rude shaping of a Socrates. He thinks,

uniformly, in a strong, sagacious, and manly style. We see manifestations of one who has given himself a thorough self-culture, and early, and by solitary effort, acquired an independent and forceful habit of thought. Our readers are probably aware that his first pursuit of knowledge was under difficulties. He was bred a paper maker. Whether paper, the instrument of letters, had any contagious influence in awakening a literary taste we cannot say, but it was awakened in great strength. Under the occasional superintendence of a worthy Antiburgher clergyman (the late Mr Wallace of Dunblane) he commenced studying the languages. Studying with a string-suspended Virgil before him, he plied the while his daily task. About the same time Mr Wallace put into his hands *Foster's Essays*, a book which has been suggestive to many, and to none more so than to Dr Young. Its solemn and searching pages were more congenial to his mind than "Titrye tu patulæ," or all the dulcet harmonies of Maro's muse. They stimulated his thinking power, roused his ambition, gratified his passion for the study of human nature, and confirmed his serious impressions. How much do men owe to the proper book put into their hands at the proper time! It enters, indeed, silently, it makes no noise, but as effectually influences, the destiny as did that strange, God-guided thunderbolt which split at Luther's feet, and made

"The solitary monk that shook the world."

A thinking man ought to preserve on one precious shelf all the books which have been the bound or boarded epochs in his history, even to the very copies themselves. We dare not describe *our* emotions at beholding the old musty, dingy copies of the *Paradise Lost*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Spectator*, *Cowper's Poems*, &c., where we first met and conversed with those immortals. To miss one of their old familiar faces were as though one were to find fled from the night the Belt of Orion or the handle of the Old Plough.

Dr Young has been eminently the man of one book. And hence the general accuracy and precision of his thinking. He is not learned nor deeply informed, nor even what is called well read, but what he knows he knows thoroughly—has fully

digested and can wisely use. The man who knows one subject well, necessarily knows many subjects partially, since all subjects so slide into and intertwine with each other. Nevertheless, in this age of wide-spread information, it is to be regretted that a mind of such penetration has not larger materials to work with, that the quantity of the straw is not in proportion either to the ability of the workman, or to the tale of the bricks required. Without profound knowledge of many arts or sciences Dr Young has, however, wide sympathies with all knowledge, has picked up in the course of an active existence, much miscellaneous information, and is distinguished above the vast majority of divines by liberality of feeling and width of view.

What he seems to know best is the science of moral and metaphysical divinity. He is thoroughly versant with the writings of Jonathan Edwards, and has thought much, in the *Scottish* style of thinking, upon the intricate problems of theology. His final views seem to repose in a somewhat modified Calvinism. He has never applied to such subjects the subtler calculus of the German philosophy; nor has he, we suspect, amid the labours of his profession, allowed his mind to keep up with the stage of our present progress in metaphysical, any more than in scientific knowledge. This, too, we regret, for this alone has prevented him from taking his place at the very head of the United Presbyterian Church. All their present professors surpass him in learning—none of them, nor did Dr Balmer, surpass him in native force of mind, or in the power of writing. He has thought far more intently, more earnestly, and comprehensively, and with much less slavery to systems, to authorities, and to words, than any of them, upon the fearful and overwhelming difficulties of all theology—is admirable at balancing the difficulties of one system against those of another, and feels more than any divine we ever met with what a foolish thing dogmatism is in theology, how much need there is there especially for the exercise of charity, and what children and drivellers the wisest must own themselves, while walking beside the ocean of the Infinite Mind. We cannot help contrasting this spirit with that of an able and learned Calvinistic seceder in the west, whose dogmatism is intolerable

—who, as from the chair of an apostle, issues his oracular *ipse dixit* upon subjects where a high degree of moral probability can alone be obtained, and from whose short, abrupt sentences of gloomy fatalism we appeal to the heart of Jesus, and the essence of Christianity, as exhibited in the sermon on the Mount, and the epistles of the beloved disciple. Dr Young, in his views, has been somewhat influenced by Foster, although he has not followed his Great Master in striking out upon the dangerous abyss of speculation, but has more timidly and wisely kept near the shore.

Dr Young studied under Professor Milne of Glasgow, and while strongly disapproving of his sentiments, acknowledges, in common with all his students, many mental obligations to him. He was certainly a fine-minded old man, clear, precise, original, but cold, careless, a large nature that could rest; yet the snorings of his slumber were sometimes grand. It was said of Brummell that he snored like a gentleman. So James Milne snored like a genius—of metaphysics! What a clear, solid system he built before his students, year after year, from the first faint sensations of the infant up to the poet's dream of immortality and the philosopher's theory of God. He scouted transcendentalism; he was not much versed in the poetry of metaphysics; his views seldom tapered away into the subtle or broadened into the sublime; but he was the ideal of a clear, ingenious intellectualist, without passion, faith, force, or feeling. His lectures were masterly in matter, careless in style and manner of delivery; but he once read his class an early essay on beauty, developing the theory of Alison, which had been formed by him on independent grounds, but was written so tenderly, elegantly, in language so terse, yet so richly adorned, that the students were taken by surprise; and, contrasting it with his ordinary prelections, could solve the problem in no other way than that he had written it when in love! The worst of him was, he set himself in a quiet, effectual way to shake the faith of his students; and few came away without sharing more or less, if not in his actual doubts, at least in the infection of his cold, sceptical, materialistic spirit. Farewell, "Old Sensation," as thy students were wont to call thee. We could not resist saying this one word on thee, as we pass on.

Dr Young has made, next to theology, human nature his principal study. He has not pored much, we suspect, on the face of the outward world, has found few sermons in stones, and spent few hours in aimless, delicious reverie, under the clouds and stars. Man has been a dearer and closer study. He has been a clear and constant observer of the human heart, countenance, and manners. This tells upon his preaching, and inspirits his conversation. It is delightful to hear him, in a quiet fireside *crack*, recounting anecdotes or marking traits in the characters of the eminent, noteworthy, or eccentric persons whom he has known in the course of his life. At college, he enjoyed peculiar advantages for this study, inasmuch as he came to it not a boy, but a man. His power of painting character is great, his style being picturesque and bold, without caricature or extravagance. He is generally right in his verdict, and what evinces his discrimination, as well as kindness, he generally leans to the favourable side. He draws portraits, not profiles, where the *wrong* side of the face—the side on which the squint or wart is—is only and carefully shown.

The force, on the whole, which Dr Young principally exerts, is that of manly eloquence. He is less an original thinker than a sensible and powerful talker—for his writing, as well as preaching, is elevated talk. In declamation he never indulges. Specimens of close consecutive argumentation are rare. To the heights of poetry or oratory he never ascends. His forte lies in broad, sound, vigorous views, expressed in language always full, and often glowing, and inflamed with a mild and solemn earnestness. His imagination can scarcely be called rich or powerful; but it is genuine and plentiful. His language, although modified by the force of his own mind, has evidently been formed on the model of Foster, Irving, and Chalmers. It is somewhat heavy in its motion—not a little cumbered and verbose at times—not always proportionate to the matter expressed, but in general dignified, nervous, and clear. We like it none the worse for the antique air which hangs over it—like solemn twilight around the glimmering gravestones of an old churchyard. As in the writers just named, there is a fine and singular piecing-in of the philoso-

phical phraseology of modern times, with the scriptural language of the olden day. It reads now like a bit of Baxter, and now like a bit of Burke.

Such powers Dr Young has exhibited in various spheres. To his conversation we have already alluded ;—it is very instructive and amusing—a rich, quiet, oily, and everflowing stream of the copious results of his thought and observation—sometimes breaking out into striking jets of a more elevated strain. He is not a good soiree speaker, being incapable of, and superior to, the small talk and senseless merriment of such unique scenes. In the Synod he is listened to with much respect ; and often, amid the twaddle and noisy nonsense of aspiring dunces, his calm, dignified voice rises like the voice of a man above the gabble of a farm-yard. He very seldom speaks without *saying* something. On platforms, when the occasion is worthy of him, he can speak, and has often spoken, with great force and effect ; although his voice is rather soft, his manner rather composed, and his substance rather solid, to be a first-rate platform man. In the pulpit he does not much strike strangers ;—he hardly can be called a popular preacher. Many a babbling boy with a little elocution, a few stolen figures and a whine, would now-a-days take *nine* calls for his one ; but those who can appreciate sound, sagacious, intellectual, yet practical preaching, given forth in a natural and impressive style of delivery, neither violent nor tame, those, especially, who relish clear and massive exposition of the word of God, and those still more who hear him constantly, know how to appreciate his rare merits. He is not a pointed or memorable preacher. You do not so much carry away individual and outstanding beauties, as you do broad general ideas, and deep general impressions. To men of education he never seems obscure, but frequently falls into a metaphysical phraseology, and sometimes into a diffuseness of language, which makes him less intelligible and less effective on the vulgar. We have been sometimes amused at the verdict they pass upon him. He is a decent, sensible, worthy man, they own ; but they evidently do not consider him particularly bright—that term being reserved for the bawling, stamping retailer of commonplace, or for the smooth-tongued, smooth-faced whiner out

of stolen images, or for the glib vender of elegant nothings, or for the brute Boanerges pouring forth unmitigated terror, and mounting, as on steps of solid brimstone, to a brace or a batch of calls. These be thy gods, O intelligent and devout Israel of the 19th century !

Dr Young's highest sphere, we think, is the press. He might have been the best and most influential writer in the United Presbyterian Church. In proof of this, we appeal to his tractates on the Voluntary question, and to his Essays, published by Collins, as prefaces to distinguished Christian authors. These last attracted much notice at the time, and drew forth warm encomiums from such judges as John Foster and Sir Daniel Sandford. They were less valuable as specimens of composition than for the strong penetration of their thought. You saw in them a vigorous mind learning to write, and that only needed practice to enable it to write in a style of first-rate excellence. You saw an unknown man put to his mettle by being stationed at the side of veteran warriors, and standing the test successfully. There was nothing in them so good as Foster's Essay to Doddridge, or Irving's to Horne on the Psalms ; but as a whole, they were incomparably the best in the publication. We keenly regret that Dr Young did not perfect his training by continuing to write in a similar but ascending strain, and would suggest to him the propriety of republishing, separately, the whole series, along with such additional essays as might be advisable.

Dr Young may, perhaps, think that he has chosen the better part, in devoting himself to practical duty. He has certainly become the most laborious minister perhaps in Scotland. With more than 1000 members, and with 2000 of a general congregation, his every hour is fully occupied. In visiting the sick, in teaching the young, in calling on his members, in public meetings, in synodical business, in attending to several great causes besides, as well as in the preparation of his pulpit work, he is exemplary and unwearied. We wish we could add that he was sufficiently *repaid* (in a pecuniary sense) for his abundant labours. Congregations, alas ! do not always act in proportion to their numbers. They become too often like

the vast armies of the Persian kings—immeasurable and useless.

Dr Young, in private, has more of the essence of the great man, and less of the pretensions of the merely big man, than most of the divines we know. He does not assume airs that would be ludicrous in a Horsley, a Hall, or a Warburton, because he has got a degree, or has a large congregation, or is listened to with deference in church courts. He knows the difference between all this, and extensive reputation, a profound impression on society, or everlasting fame. He leaves such wretched coxcombries to the little souls, whom they set and suit. He smiles a quiet smile, as he witnesses the Pygmæan races, run by "small infantry," after degrees, and other such despicable distinctions. He is content to be a humble, hard-working, and, (notwithstanding a degree of pawkiness not unbeseeming) an honest man. Honour to him, especially, for the noble stand he made of late on the question of American slavery.

Dr Young, as a man, is rather tall, with a large head and brow, with small but keen eyes, set very near each other, a slight shade of anxiety, and habitual thought, resting on his face; but the whole expression of face, body, and aspect, is that of large, mild, and thoughtful composure. He is undoubtedly the most distinguished citizen of no mean city—the Fair City of Perth.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1848.

REV. WILLIAM LINDSAY ALEXANDER, D.D.,
EDINBURGH.

IN one of the dingiest corners of Modern Athens, close by the College, and almost inaccessible to the uninitiated in the labyrinths for which it is justly celebrated, stands a plain unpretending chapel, little distinguished from the mass of stone and mortar surrounding. Thitherward, with carefully picked steps, an observer may, of a Sabbath morning, detect a crowd of respectable individuals and families wending gravely along as becometh church goers. Making one of their number, you enter a door of external unpretending appearance, guessed only to lead into a chapel by the fact of the plate and the attendant officials. Inside, the building is spacious, though plain, the congregation numerous. Of its history one may learn something from a marble tablet in the wall erected to the memory of the Rev. J. Aikman, its first minister, by whom, we believe, it was bequeathed to the congregation now occupying it and their successors. After being ushered into a pew by a beadle, a stranger may be presumed to wait a few minutes entertained by the whispers of the ladies of the congregation in conversation not altogether about things sacred. Suddenly a dead silence reigns in the place, unbroken save by the sound of the beadle imbibing snuff. You look around, and a tall slender figure is seen moving up the pulpit stairs sedately. He turns round and scrutinises the congregation, and a first view is obtained of one of the most popular preachers of the day. His features are dark and sallow, his countenance sharp set, his lips thin and firm, with a peculiar satirical curl indicative of the peculiar quality of the inner man.

Yet, on closer scrutiny, it is impossible to fail observing a certain thoughtful impression stamped on his features—an intellectual radiance kindling on them which reveals the greatness of the mind it dimly reflects.

It is a dangerous matter to meddle with a people's idol, be it opinion or person. Overpraise it, you are distrusted; under-rate it, you are condemned; act fairly by it, you please no one. Equally so with an individual. A lay or clerical demi-god must be spoken reverently and warily of, either in praise or disparagement, unless the unfortunate meddler wishes the war whoop of the idol's worshippers about his ears. The reason is, perhaps, that as a man is the worst possible judge of his own likeness, so his admirers, having formed their ideal, lose it in the reality. If the angel be painted without the wings it ceases to be an angel, though these embellishments are but the work of fancy. And if the angel were drawn with horns and wings its angelic properties would cease, though the one appendage is as reasonable as the other. So if the idol be presented with less of his ideal qualifications than his admirers have reared, or any additional qualification which they have not supposed, the artist is condemned and the likeness scouted. On all hands, therefore, idol meddling is, like idol worshiping, at best an unprofitable, and in all likelihood a dangerous business. Considering this, it is with some degree of doubt and hesitation we proceed with the sketch. Unfortunately for the sketcher, Dr Alexander occupies the position of a Hero amongst his own denomination, at least of a large section of it. Although the body recognises no secular authority as a body, its younger members, on disputed points, exhibit a remarkable deference to his opinions. He is the oracle of young Independency. His supreme advice may not weigh much with some of the older and more rigidly independent of the denomination, at least not so much as with the younger branches. We say this, however much it may be received as heresy, without the slightest disparagement to the denomination or to the doctor himself. As a preacher, a scholar, an author, and a man of general attainments, we believe him worthy of all the deference shown him.

As a preacher he principally comes under the range of our

present observation. It is to this he owes his present elevation—his works, controversial and otherwise, deriving more celebrity from his name than he from them. Whilst laying claim to much originality of thought or manner, there is also a strong individuality in his preaching. It is something distinct and aloof from the usual pulpit prelections heard even from men of equal celebrity. It were difficult to say whether in lecturing or discourse he shines most, but we are disposed to think the balance should turn in favour of the former. His expository qualifications are great, and exposition affords him more scope for the exercise of his general talents than adherence to one topic. One great feature of his preaching confirms this view—that of bringing out, by contrast, from a text much that, strictly speaking, is not necessary, though akin to it. For example, were the doctor adopting the “kingdom of heaven” as his subject, we would have as much illustration of what that kingdom is not, as of what it is; or, were the theme the practice of any Christian virtue—sober-mindedness say—there would first be a long negative description of the quality, preparatory to the positive illustrations; and in the first part a minute examination of those characters assuming possession of the quality or believed to possess it; then, by comparison with the reality, their falsity shown. Mere illustration of what the passage or text naturally contained, a man of very ordinary mind, with little other appliance, may accomplish; but here the exercise of a two-fold power is developed. Often by far the happiest parts of his sermons are those in which he pulls down preconceived errors regarding his subject, and in which the follies, the fashions, and the shams of the age, are exposed, standing out against the Christian life and hope. Few men can more happily hit off these petty weaknesses by which society is characterised. The dandy, perfumed, strutting in borrowed plumes, the fair “ambulating block of millinery,” with sweeping hair and languid eye, equally with the stiff staid buckram imitation of a Christian, or the dreary icicle—often called such, we have heard him—with one quiet satirical touch at once demolish. The doctor’s propensity to satire is very strong. It never verges with him into caricature or pulpit buffoonery, and as little partakes of the aquafortis quality of

the wit of a would-be school of moderns, but has a quiet gravity becoming the office and the man. It is on the platform, however, that this predilection obtains full scope, and to understand the infinite humour lurking beneath the clerical garb, one must hear him speak at a meeting where a question of civil or religious importance is agitated. Here the peculiar tact with which he catches at the weak points of an opponent's argument, or demolishes a position by a few happy strokes, pelt-ing the object of his assault, or the maintainer of the principle, with a shower of feathered scorpions, renders him no pleasant antagonist. We have rarely seen him worsted, perhaps because rarely meeting with a qualified opponent. We thought something like an opportunity had occurred in his late recontre with a celebrated Free Church divine, but that gentleman, after getting fairly afloat in the controversy, unfortunately turned to the shore again. It is no uncommon circumstance or peculiarity in the mental constitution of men of genius, to find the opposite qualities of humour and pathos strongly blended in one individual. Indeed, so far from its being unusual, we find it remarkably illustrated in the history of Cowper, Robert Hall, Jeremy Taylor, Hood, Lamb, and a host of others. These antagonistic emotions are in no small degree manifested by Dr Alexander. His style is not merely

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe,"

but from lively to strong deep pathos. The dark eye that burns with a withering ridicule, or is kindled with a quaint thought, beams as often inspired with the light of a solemn overflowing soul. The lip that curls with scorn over the pursuits and trappings of folly, can relax into the winning softness of peace; the tongue that utters the eccentric sallies of wit, or darts the arrow of satire, can utter thoughts that

"Haunt us as eagles haunt the mountain air;
Thoughts which command all coming times and minds,
As from a tower—a warden;—fix themselves
Deep in the heart, as meteor stones in earth,
Dropped from some higher sphere."

To those grandly eloquent climaxes the hearers in Argyle Square chapel are no strangers. The laughing melody of the brooklet is often succeeded by the thunder of the cataract; the sneer that withered the self-pride of yonder gilded puppet, is

followed by the solemn thrilling denunciation of the sin of his pride. To his eloquence there is no drawback. As regards his voice, so long as confined within a moderate pitch, its natural ruggedness is not unpleasant, but rather otherwise; but once roused into eloquence it loses all the music it ever possessed, becoming broken, jagged, and unmanageable. The energy alone of his appearance, and the "burning thoughts" he utters, redeem the sound.

As a scholar, Dr Alexander's qualifications rank high. His thorough acquaintance with Biblical literature in all its branches admirably adapt him for professorship. Joined with these, a practical acquaintance with the modern continental languages, and whose literature and philosophy seem familiar to him, place him far above one merely distinguished by a Dominie Samson sort of erudition. We have envied the theological body upon whose faculties the doctor's prelections are wont to be exercised, and regretted that the rich streams of his learning and eloquence should be poured out on such narrow limits. When the dispute recently occurred regarding one of the professional seats in Edinburgh College, it was rumoured that the decision of Mr M'Douall's right to hold office without the usual tests, would open up a door to Dr Alexander, whose admirers were earnestly bent on getting him a niche in alma mater. *Sic fama narratur.*

As a writer, his style is terse, vigorous, and polished. He does not delight in lispings numbers, and possesses as little sympathy with the hot-blast school, with whom "*vox et preterea nihil*" seems the motto, so prolific in the present age. A strong, hardy common sense, has preserved him from the taint of either. In forming an opinion, we should say the pen is a very easy instrument in his fingers. Writing costs him little labour. A sentence seldom requires much alteration or elaboration. There is no appearance of effort in his composition, and his style is devoid of all mannerism. Of the intrinsic merits of his works others have spoken. His great treatise on Anglo-Catholicism the Edinburgh Review has designated as "Mr Lindsay Alexander's learned and able work." It has not met with that reception its merits entitled it to, although loudly puffed by a host of critics. We rather suspect this is the doc-

tor's own pet treatise. He has displayed much more scholarship, more earnest profound thought, and more genuine logic in it than in any other prior or subsequent production. Of his *Memoirs of John Watson of Musselburgh* our own impression, on the perusal of it, was that honest John Watson's memory had much better been allowed to preserve his memorial in the hearts of those who loved him than this volume did add anything thereto. His *Harmony of the Old and New Testaments* will be long valued by the student and the pastor. His *Switzerland and the Swiss Churches* is likely to prove the most popular of any one of all his volumes. If better known, we think its success would prove certain. There is more of the doctor and less of the professor in it than in any other volume or article we have read from his pen. It is just such a pleasant companion as readers of all classes can associate with, and in which every one may find matter to his taste. In addition to the authorship of these and other minor works, he has for a considerable time past occupied the editorial chair. The *Scottish Congregational Magazine* has been carried on under his auspices for some time. From what we have seen of this journal, the management displays more talent than tact, and more independence than prudence.

In private life the doctor is distinguished for his amiability and blandness. He possesses the enviable quality of accommodating himself to whatever position his duties naturally lead him into. To the inexperienced, a counsellor; to the poor, a friend; to the weak, an adviser; to youth, one who enters into the feelings and pursuits of youth; to the ignorant, an instructor; and to the learned, a companion—fulfilling, if possible, the apostolic injunction, all things to all men, if thereby men may be saved.

REV. JOHN EDWARDS,

GREENHEAD UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GLASGOW.

TRUE greatness is ill to define, yet, like the beautiful and sublime in nature, we cannot come into contact with it without feeling its presence and confessing its power. The intellectual ability which flashes forth in oratorical effort is often easily distinguishable from that which develops itself in the regions of metaphysical or mathematical research. In both cases, however, there may be a display of mental capacity, not only equally useful, but equally great; and the "diversities of gifts so conspicuous in the world of mind are no less desirable and refreshing than the "varied scenes" of inanimate creation. A certain order of greatness is ascribed to the man who can arrange material objects in the most effective order. The military commander who can arrange his army in better order than his rival commander, is the greater. There is also mere intellectual greatness, such as that displayed in a Newton, in the walks of a lofty region of mathematics. There is, besides, moral greatness which combines the intellectual with the tender—thought with feeling. The poet necessarily possesses this power. A mere intellectualist is not a poet, and a man of mere feeling is not a poet. The former, indeed, might construct verses altogether unobjectionable in point of artistical accuracy—each line complete as regards syllable and rhyme, and the latter might throw out a rhapsody of sentimentalism, but neither the one nor the other would be poetry. Poetry demands the union of head and of heart—the sterner with the

softer attributes. We need not say that what is requisite in a poet is requisite in a preacher. A great master has said that every discourse is a poem, and if so its composer must have the requisites of a poet. The subject of our sketch possesses few of those qualities which secure a vulgar or unenlightened popularity; but yet, unquestionably, he has the requisites of a successful teacher. Naturally meditative and retiring, he has hitherto avoided the public eye—pursuing the “even tenor of his way”—far from scenes of noisy agitation and platform parade. His name may not be known in *all* the churches, nor may his pulpit exhibitions be sufficient to draw after him admiring crowds, yet we are greatly mistaken if he does not possess intellectual qualities of a superior description. In the bare mechanism of preaching we should say that he is defective. Like many of our best thinkers and soundest divines he has not studied the *modus operandi* of delivery, or heartily despises it as an instrument in communicating the high and solemn verities of the gospel. “Elocution may do well enough as a pastime for schoolboys, or to form a crutch for the support of insipid and brainless declamation, but such doubtful and artificial aid can only degrade, never dignify a true herald of the cross.” We very much doubt the soundness of such reasoning. Thought may be the great, the main quality required for the present age, but if the *thought* of Milton or Shakspeare may acquire fresh meaning, or disclose new beauty under a graceful and impassioned elocution, why not the sublime truths of revelation? From this it will be inferred that the rev. gentleman whose name heads this article is no attitudiniser. His manner, if not unexceptionable, is at least devoid of all trick or “start theatric.” He never loses himself in rapsody; even in his most elaborated passages, when borne aloft to a climax of singular beauty, his delivery is chastened, almost cold. Sometimes a slight hesitancy, or pause in the middle of a sentence, destroys the symphony of an elegant period; and, by making a demand on the hearer, is apt to tire and fag a promiscuous audience. Indeed, the general defect of Mr E.’s manner seems to lie in his anxiety to avoid “all affectation.” He does not know the meaning of the phrase, “the dignity of the cloth.” Not that his manner is undigni-

fied, but he wishes to divest himself of all appearance of class-superiority, and places himself on a level with his audience. Desirous that they should think and feel that he is one of themselves, he shrinks from everything that could smack of the glass. He is no stage player. He cannot keep his audience at a distance from him. He wants to talk with it—not according to this or that school of etiquette—but, in a homely, familiar, yet earnest manner. He has to tell of a matter that concerns man's best interests, and, in his anxiety to secure attention engaged, he is willing to forget the trimmed gestures and graceful cadences of the finished orator. Still, however, we think that a little care bestowed on his delivery would add much to his attraction as a preacher, without at all marring that unassuming simplicity and genuine earnestness so conspicuous in his manner.

His style is clear, simple, terse, and elegant. Carlylisms, Germanisms, or any other *ism* that would obscure or mystify, his severe classic taste would dismiss with contempt. Some preachers clothe the weakest ideas in a huge and cumbersome phraseology. If they do not benefit, they can at least bewilder, and by the jingle of an affected and verbose style, the attempt is made to metamorphose dulness into brilliancy, and superficiality into depth. The characteristic of our present subject is idea, not verbiage. In his composition there is no effort at sentence-making perceptible. His aim is *power* rather than *polish*. He calls attention to the thought he wishes to communicate, rather than to its graceful expression. Not that he does not compose with care. Quite the reverse. But he throws such an air of natural ease and simplicity around his style, that the labour of the artificer cannot be discovered. It is the perfection of art that it appears artless; and this to a very considerable extent is the distinctive peculiarity of this preacher's style. He cares not to captivate with harmonious periods, or startle with bold and bootless paradoxes. His prime object is to assail the judgment—justly judging that the former, though important in its own place, is nevertheless a secondary and subordinate qualification in the character of a Christian teacher. Let no one suppose, however, that the graces of composition are rejected. This would be a great mistake. The frequent

occurrence of beautiful antithesis—of natural and happy alliteration—of rich and appropriate imagery—lend a charm to his style, and can only be the result of careful pruning. Some of his descriptive passages are highly finished—conceived in a vein of true poetry, and arrayed in a garb of choice and elegant language.

The construction of Mr Edwards' mind is metaphysical. A current of deep solid thought runs through his discourses. In his terse and condensed style he throws out principles and general truths with evident ease—giving, thereby, an intellectual and philosophical character to his preaching, which, to an intelligent mind, adds lustre to the peculiar and simple truths of the gospel. In handling his subject, the preacher takes a large and comprehensive range of thought,—not that he is ever guilty of rambling or attempts to be exhaustive. Examining the subject in its entire magnitude, he seizes upon its most striking and important relations, gives them an inviting and logical consistency, and, as we have already hinted, enunciates them in a style of neat, nervous, and cogent argumentation. There is an originality in his matter which is quite refreshing. One may not be captivated by a sustained brilliancy of conception, or entranced by the highest flights of oratory, yet he is never found tame and uninteresting. He is always sensible, never trifling. His preaching does not consist of an evenly flow of polished truisms, or common-place sentiment. Neither is he a mere theorist, though, we may guess, he has formed enlarged and independent opinions on what the schoolmen would have called "the nature of things." With him there is no incongruity between the word and works of God. He sympathises with the thought,

"The world's a system of theology."

Creation is the hand-maid of Calvary. He would have men understand that there may be an alliance between nature and Revelation, forming, as they do, parts of one great whole, and both contributing to the *denouement* of life's mystic drama. Hence there is a high and elevating philosophy spread over his preaching. He labours to make the cross a reasonable as well as an authoritative faith. He does not appeal to the passions. We question if he can work upon the feelings. But

he will reason with you, though he cannot rouse you. Too intellectual himself to be borne away on the afflatus of passion, he, of course, cannot infuse the inspiration into others. On this account the argumentative part of his discourses seems to us the most effective and complete. It is clear, racy, and conclusive. The mind is led step by step in the process of ratiocination, until the deduction of the preacher becomes unavoidable. A natural order is followed, and occasionally a novel or important idea is evolved to the best advantage, and insisted upon with peculiar force. The peroration is often beautiful, and full of a warm and genial theology. His discourses, as a whole, may be characterised as productions of solid thinking, of logical accuracy, of deep spirituality, of simple and elegant diction. No one can hear them without being persuaded that the preacher is a man of sterling ability.

Mr Edwards is about the middle size, stout make, and of a thoughtful countenance. His appearance in the pulpit is prepossessing. A phrenologist would pronounce him to have a finely-developed brow, being large and massive. The features of the face more clearly indicate "the thinker." At times there is a gravity and abstractedness in his look which almost throw over the countenance an air of severity or sadness. At other times, especially in the reading of the Psalm and in prayer, this is not observable. He was ordained in 1830, and has laboured since with energy and success. Greenhead United Presbyterian congregation is large, intelligent, and influential.

OCTOBER 21, 1848.

REV. STEWART BATES, D.D.,

WEST CAMPBELL STREET, GLASGOW.

IT is well for the Church and the world that individual effort is not limited to sectional connexion. The human mind, aware of its weakness and imperfection, erects barriers within which to display its sympathies. The one perfect MIND that formed and sustains the universe can at once spread His sympathies over the amplitudes of creation, and concentrate them on every point; but man feels that, to cherish and strengthen his affections, concentration rather than expansion must be his frequent resort. In accommodation to man's weakness, he is placed in families in order to bring out his best affections. To conceive of one to whom the terms father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, relative, friend, are linked with no tender association, is to fancy one inferior to the wildest savages. The mind requires a pillow on which to repose, and in the sweets of domestic life it finds its chief delight. It is probably the same feeling which makes man seek happiness in families that originates sectional limits. Religion is such, in its spirit and principles, that few can satisfy themselves with making it a mere family matter. It naturally leads to more extensive union, by associating its disciples into congregations, and eventually into denominations. Each family apart has its peculiar joys, and each congregation and sect have also their peculiar privileges. The principles which form and maintain the different religious denominations are evidently of a mixed character. The best and the most questionable feelings may be traced at work in this matter. The desire to obey God, by

adopting a formula of worship in accordance with his will, may occasionally mix with a desire to secure sectional applause. The desire to be a separate and holy people may at times be mixed with the unlovely spirit which says to another, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou." The adherents of different sects generally believe that they are Christians, because they believe what Christians generally believe; but each also believes that he is a better Christian than others, because he believes something which they do not believe. It is a remarkable fact, however, while in small religious sects there are men of the first order of mind, that not to them, but to their inferiors, the perpetuity of these sects belongs. Their views would soon lead to amalgamation with other bodies, but for an inferior class, who would go to the gibbet for their distinctive Shibboleth. This small class look with pious horror on the doings of their chief men, as leading to mistake and destruction. The mind of superior mould may delight to exercise itself within sectarian limits, just as within the limits of a family, but there are times when its affections and sympathies refuse to be limited, and they flow out on all that bear evidence of discipleship. There may be in some bodies not a few spirits of such narrow desires that beyond their own denomination they have not a single feeling to extend, and no charity to exercise. These pass through life under the impression that Christians are indeed a little flock—so little, as to contain only their own dear brethren. The heaven such anticipate will, of course, be a heaven of Baptists or Independents, or Reformed Presbyterians (according as their views may be), partaking of all the narrow selfishness which marked them on earth. The idea, could it be entertained, that heaven will be filled with all denominations, would make them lose all desire to be there. Such, however, though they may retain all their narrow-mindedness till they reach the Jordan, will lose them in its waters, and be ready, on reaching the heavenly land beyond, to join in the song sung by those of every nation, and tongue, and people, and sect. The adherents of these bodies, however, who have minds of a superior class, cannot shut their sympathies within denominational limits, even in this world. They love their families, their friends, their religious associates,

much, but they love also the Saviour and all his friends. They may speak, indeed, of Christians as a little flock, but they do not, they cannot, believe that within their denomination all the members of that flock are included. Can such men as our Wardlaws, and our Symingtons, and our Bates, confine their sympathies within sectarian limits? Let their conduct tell. Are they not first in every effort to promote Christian union among all denominations, and to propose such measures as will issue in "party names being known no more"? The subject of our sketch may be happy in the society of his family—happy in an attached congregation—but it is on the platform of an unsectarian Christianity that he finds full play for his best affections, and approximates nearest to him who is light and love. In his own pulpit he appears as an able minister of the gospel, and one of the brightest ornaments of the body with which he is associated; but on the platform of evangelical Christendom he appears in all his untrammelled superiority, to plead the cause of God and of the world.

On the forenoon of Sabbath last he, as usual, entered the pulpit, in West Campbell street, about five minutes past 11. Contrary to the usual practice in our city, he commenced, not by praise, but by prayer. After engaging six or seven minutes in that exercise he read the first four verses of the 90th Psalm in metre, which he expounded at great length—the exposition, which was historical, critical, and practical, occupying thirty minutes. The verses were then sung, and sung with much earnestness—the entire congregation, from the oldest to the youngest, laudably joining. Indeed we have never seen a congregation sing so universally—not one was silent. The occasional want of harmony is amply compensated for by the unanimity of effort. After praise, prayer was again offered, and though it lasted but about fourteen minutes twelve o'clock was struck before it was over. Immediately after prayer, Luke xvi. 6—11 inclusive was read as subject of lecture. (The verses narrate the parable of the barren fig tree.) He commenced by saying that the passage was so important that, though it had occupied attention on the forenoon of the previous Sabbath, it would again properly engage their attention in present circumstances. The circumstances

of the parable were sufficiently simple, and the natural allusion would be well understood by the Jews. The dry and sunny hills of their country were covered with vines. The higher grounds not suitable for grain were well adapted for the culture of the vine. The Jews expended much labour on these high grounds, by forming them into artificial terraces and covering the rocky parts with soil. The fruit of the vine formed an article of diet in its fresh state, and part of it was fermented, and became strong drink, in which they often too freely indulged. In the passage before us a fig tree is spoken of. Three years in succession did the owner come looking for fruit on it. This shows the care of God over his church, which is his vineyard, in which believers are trees of his planting. He visits this vineyard to ascertain who is bearing fruit. No one can say how long he will be spared. The parable shows, however, that barrenness exposes to the sentence of excision, and those in charge of the vineyard have something to do with these unfruitful branches. There are two ways of cutting down. The one is by excision from the church—for what the officers of the church bind on earth is bound in heaven. Whose sins they retain they are retained. If the office-bearers of the church refuse to admit men into the church, or be constrained to exclude them, that is to retain their sins. Christ puts authority in the decisions of office-bearers, and what they do is confirmed in heaven. To be released by the office-bearers is a great blessing, and to be suspended from privilege is to be under the tokens of God's displeasure. The sentence here is to cut down the barren tree. Barren trees and barren professors exert an evil and pernicious influence. Their apathy, neglect of duty, irregularity of attendance on the means of grace, their late coming to the house of God, their half day worship—as if the less of religion the better—exert a chilling effect on others, and thus discourages and disheartens them. They also, by their small contributions, their various pitiful and penurious habits, coupled with their pretension to superior sanctity, their censoriousness and evil speaking, the large license they take with the failings of others, are productive of evil. The good man will not take up an evil report, but these spurious

professors forge evil reports. The husbandman pleads here for the barren tree. Compassion is exhibited, and ought to mark the faithful vine dresser. The preacher then enumerated a number of the points of Christian duty and character which every one was to try himself regarding. He concluded his discourse at fourteen minutes to one—having lectured about three quarters of an hour. After praise and prayer the congregation was dismissed about one. The afternoon service was similar in order and length, but our space excludes an outline.

As a point of order, we may state that the service described above was objectionable as regards length. Ministers who retain their people two hours in the forenoon have no good ground to object to their people absenting themselves in the afternoon. In the above service there was an exposition of a Psalm of half an hour's length, and a lecture of three quarters, and really they have good stomachs that, after devouring two such messes, can return in an hour and demand more. Whether the steward that starves or pampers those under his care is most to blame it is difficult to determine. He who after dealing out such large messes tells the recipients to return in an hour and get as much more, has great faith in their gastric capabilities. While we decidedly object to these two hour sederunts, we also demur as to the order of worship followed on this occasion. As to commencing with prayer instead of praise, there can be little objection, provided the prayer be short and suitable, but it is a question whether it should be allowed to supersede praise—and the exposition of half an hour's length before singing is what many will consider an infringement on proper order. A congregation meets for the devotional as well as for the didactical, and there is some danger of allowing the latter to interfere with the former. We are not reconciled to the plan of these lengthy expositions in the midst of the introductory devotional service. The Church of England devotes an hour and a half to the devotional before the didactic commences, and it is surely going to the other extreme to commence the didactic in the midst of the devotional—to, in a word, curtail the devotional in order to make way for the teaching department.

Did religion consist in the exercise of the understanding alone such a course might be adopted ; but Christians meet to have their hearts warmed, their feelings drawn forth, to have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and with one another. But while objections may be taken to the order of the services, there is also much to commend in the matter of them. The subject of our sketch possesses a vigorous and argumentative mind. He thinks clearly, and expresses himself with much precision. He has a ready command of appropriate language, so that he can express himself fluently on any given subject without premeditation. It is clear, however, that he both thinks and reads extensively and systematically. His knowledge is as well arranged as it is general, and his ideas are as ready at his command as is the nervous diction in which they are clothed. He preaches generally without notes, which is in some danger of leading to diffuseness and unnecessary length. It would be doing him injustice not to own that, in point of native vigour of mind, and in extensive acquirements and accomplishments, he stands far above mediocrity. The neatness and accuracy of language he has reached could have been acquired only by much study and care.

His matter is evangelical and practical. He preaches the sovereignty of God, and also the responsibility of man—probably the latter in the largest proportion. While he does not omit to preach Christ, he dwells largely on the duties of the Christian. He shows that privilege ever has its attendant obligations, and that profession without practice is vain. Probably his preaching, though earnest, is not so urgent as some might desire. Intellectually it is very superior ; but there is sometimes less than desirable to feed the heart and warm the affections. His people cannot fail to understand his doctrines, but some may fail to feel their power. The system propounded is complete in its proportions ; but occasionally scantily supplied with the vital principle. His teachings are always stately and graceful, occasionally unimpassioned and cold. No man can excel him in preaching Christian duty, but some may in exhibiting principle.

There is one thing in the lecture which may startle many,

and which certainly involves some difficulty. Protestants generally limit the "binding and loosing," and the use of the keys of the kingdom, to the apostles; but in the outline given, the same passages are applied without limitation to office-bearers of the Church still. The preacher, to be sure, stated that the findings of Church officers, *in accordance with the Divine will*, were ratified in heaven; but the promises of direction in these findings is as unqualified as the sanction of the findings, so that all decisions of Church officers will have the Divine sanction. We need not state that all Protestantism is at this moment under the ban of the Pope, and if that is ratified in heaven our fate is sealed. Different bodies of Protestants are at this moment solemnly abjuring each other; but the decisions of both cannot be ratified. The members of the very church in question, after they have been anathematised, form other churches, which anathematise those who leave them in turn, rendering such decisions more specious than formidable. Indeed, despite the imperative nature in which he stated the subject, we believe that he estimates sectarian censure as cheaply as any can. He is greatly too intelligent to suppose that a half dozen poor fallible sinners have now power to shut heaven against some equally erring creature. He must hold a certain standard of doctrine and of discipline, but he cannot believe that power is given to seal the fate of those who depart from that standard. It is desirable to be explicit on this point. Peter should be allowed the sole use of the keys, as Protestants can make but a sorry use of them. At the same moment one sect may be shutting heaven against another sect, which is most religiously shutting out its judge and avenger. Nor are matters of practice, any more than of faith, a sufficient warrant to use these keys. Good men mistake, while bad men sometimes maintain, the semblance of goodness. Let each sect maintain its faith, but let none suppose that they are the custodiers of the faith of others, or that they are called to determine their future state.

Dr Bates was ordained in 1822, and is, consequently, in the 27th year of his ministry. He has a numerous and respectable congregation, and is unremitting in the discharge of

his duties. He takes an active part in conducting religious and benevolent societies, and is a laborious member of the Evangelical Alliance. He is much respected in our city for his amiable and unostentatious deportment, and the energy and activity of his character. Dr Bates' personal appearance is dignified and commanding. He is tall and thin, with sharp features and lofty brow. His action, if not very animated, is at least unobjectionable, and his pulpit appearances can give no offence to the most fastidious. His voice is clear and sharp, and his enunciation distinct and musical. His accentuation and pronunciation are accurate, and he can with ease make himself audible to the largest congregation.

OCTOBER 28, 1848.

REV. JOHN MARSHALL,

FORFAR.

ON a recent occasion we had an opportunity of hearing the Rev. Mr Marshall officiate in St John's Episcopal Chapel, Anderston. He chose for his text 1 Corinthians i. 22—24, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom," &c. He commenced by saying, that no two nations in the world were ever more widely different in their customs, manners, and habits of thinking, than were the Greeks and the Jews. The latter had never accomplished anything great, either in art or in science. Familiar in matters of religion with the most sublime conceptions of the Supreme Being, they were, as a body, in almost every other respect remarkably ignorant. The Greeks, on the other hand, had arrived at a very high state of civilisation and refinement. In the arts and sciences, in poetry, sculpture, and philosophy, they greatly excelled. In religion, however, their ideas were grovelling indeed. Their temples, their groves, and their fountains were in general consecrated to deities more like demons than gods. In the text St Paul, in the first place, marks the distinctive characters of the two nations. 2dly, Notwithstanding their disparity of disposition, both united in condemning the gospel. 3dly. The apostle asserts that, in defiance of such a twofold condemnation, the doctrine of Christ was in reality attended by the highest and most complete evidence which, even on his own principles, either a Jew or a Greek could rationally demand. On the first head, the rev. gentleman said, "The Greeks seek after wisdom." To those conversant with the history of Greece during the time of our Saviour and his apostles, the characteristic feature in the minds of its inhabitants must be quite familiar. Every schoolboy knows that no nation

ever valued so highly the powers of oratory and disputation as did the ancient Greeks. "The Jews require a sign." The temperament of the Jews was entirely different. What was valuable to the countrymen of Socrates, Demosthenes, and Plato, was slightly regarded by the descendants of Jacob. The latter cared neither for the claims of reasoning nor for embellishments of discourse. Towards the establishment of the truth of any new doctrine they had but one test—a sign from heaven. When a Jew looked back on the ancient glories of his race, these glories were intimately connected in his mind with the most astonishing manifestations of divine power. He remembered Abraham receiving three angels in the plains of Mamre; he remembered Isaac returning under the protection of God to his native land; he remembered Israel, a Syrian ready to perish, going down into Egypt, and becoming a great nation; he remembered Moses at the Red Sea, and on Mount Horeb; Joshua in the valley of Aijalon; and Samson in the temple of the Philistines. He knew that the hand of God was evident in each event, and he could not forget that every divine revelation to his nation had been accompanied by signs and wonders. His cry, therefore, on the subject of Christianity was, "Give us a sign from heaven and we will believe." There never was, and never will be, such a series of miracles displayed before the eyes of man, as those which the New Testament records to have been performed by Jesus of Nazareth. The heavens, the earth, and the wide sea, the powers above and the powers below, the animate and inanimate things of creation, all these had, at one time or other, borne testimony of his right to the character of Messiah. Well, therefore, might he turn from them with an aspect of pity and rebuke, while he thus addressed them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall be no sign given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas," &c. On the second head it was remarked, "We," says the apostle, "preach Christ crucified: unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." The prophets of old had described the Messiah in terms of the most magnificent kind. These terms the children of Jacob, in the era of his actual appearance, were pleased to understand, as having relation to him, not in a spiritual but in a

temporal sense. They imagined him a warrior, who should deliver them from the Roman oppression. They painted him a conqueror, treading under foot the nations, and dragging the captive monarchs of the earth at his chariot wheels. When, therefore, the Lord of life arrived, and they found that he did not come in the character either of a warrior or a conqueror, they gave themselves up to an evil heart of unbelief, and spurned his pretensions with contempt. Thus was the preaching of Christ crucified, in other words, of the doctrine of Christ's crucifixion, a stumblingblock to the Jews. Nor was it in a less degree foolishness to the Greeks. The latter saw no beauty either in the doctrines or the commandments of Jesus that they should desire them. The accents of Demosthenes yet rung in their ears. They were, besides, accustomed, in the various schools of the philosophers, to hear doctrines supported by logical subtlety, and precepts advanced amid every ornament of speech. Such things—had they been desirable—were not to be found in the gospel. It was a gospel of peace and of salvation to all mankind. Its heaven-born truths were not intended for the exclusive use of the great or the gay, the learned or the wise. It was not a matter for declamation or disputation at all, and from its very plainness and simplicity it was received by the sophists of Athens only with derision. On the third head, Mr Marshall observed, the apostle says, "Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is, or displays, the power of God, also the wisdom of God." To the Jews the divine commission of Jesus Christ ought to have been clearly apparent, in the numerous prophecies which were fulfilled in his person, and in his person only, and in the stupendous miracles which, during the course of his ministry, he wrought. If the men of Judah required a sign, what greater sign could they possibly have than that of raising the dead to life? The chief sign which the Jews expected was our Lord's setting up an earthly throne and becoming the founder of a temporal dynasty of princes. This to the Most High God would have been a thing of easy accomplishment, but, in reality, it would neither have answered the ends of divine wisdom nor have been so ample a demonstration of divine power as was the erection of that spiritual kingdom which he has established. The

Greeks had, equally with the Jews, no sufficient cause for rejecting the gospel. Though, from its not recommending itself in the set forms of artificial and perplexing disputation, it seemed foolishness to the conceited philosophers of Attica, yet did it, in point of true reason, wisdom, and goodness, approve itself a doctrine in all respects excellent, and worthy of God. The gospel not only sanctions, but strengthens and confirms all the great truths of natural religion. It reveals, as tenets of unalterable certainty, the being, the attributes, and the superintending providence of Jehovah. It declares the immortality of the human soul, and the existence of a future state of punishments and rewards. It displays the Mediator of the new covenant, first offering himself up as a sacrifice, and then sitting at the right hand of the celestial Majesty, as an intercessor for the sins of man. On these, as well as on many other accounts, it has been proclaimed by the loftiest intellects and the most cultivated minds to be a perfect proof of divine wisdom. Unto them which are called, and who, in a spirit of meekness, obey the call, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is, indeed, the power of God and the wisdom of God. In his concluding observations, Mr Marshall said, that all sincere Christians must unhesitatingly condemn the stubborn infidelity of the Jews. There are methods by which we, although acknowledging in words the divine authority of Christianity, may practically deny it. In a thousand various ways the gospel may become to us both foolishness and a stumblingblock. It is made a stumblingblock in our path when we walk in the ways of sin, and it assumes in our eyes the aspect of foolishness when we permit the allurements of the life that now is to be placed in comparison with that which is to come.

Mr Marshall's style is chaste and elegant, terse and comprehensive. He does not waste words in expressing his meaning, but goes direct to the point. The theology of his discourses is deemed evangelical, and he reads the prayers of his church with taste and the purest elocution.

He was born July, 1807, at Carsbank, near Forfar, formerly a property belonging to the family of Guthrie, now a part of the estate of Gray of Carse. He received the usual course of education till he was fourteen years of age, when he was sent to the school of Witton-le-Wear, near the residence of Bishop

Auckland, in the diocese of Durham, and placed under the Rev. George Newby, who was afterwards, in succession, vicar of Stockton-on-Tees and rector of Whickham, near Gateshead. In 1822 he returned to Scotland, and subsequently studied at King's College University and Marischall College, Aberdeen, and in Edinburgh. In 1828 he was admitted to deacon's orders by Dr Torry, bishop of Dunkeld, and in the following year was ordained to priest's orders by Dr Skinner, bishop of Aberdeen, now styled Primus.

In November, 1830, Mr Marshall undertook the pastoral charge of the Episcopal chapel at Kirkaldy. In 1833 he published two sermons on the "Intermediate State," which attracted some attention by the remarks of the reviewers. They have been republished in the shape of articles in the *Church of England Journal*. His "History of the Origin and Immediate Causes of the Great Rebellion" was written during his residence in Kirkaldy. He lost his health by his application to this work, and by too assiduous attention to his studies, and was in consequence obliged to travel for twelve months, leaving his charge in the care of a curate. On his return he gave up his charge, and retired to a small property at Blairgowrie, Perthshire, in 1839. In July, 1838, Mr Marshall published a letter to Sir George Sinclair, Bart., M.P., on occasion of a meeting in Edinburgh, to commemorate the General Assembly at Glasgow in 1638.

In 1841 Mr Marshall visited the present Archbishop of York, then Bishop of Hereford, at Hereford, and while there he formed the Bridgenorth Association for the benefit of the Scottish Episcopal Church. At this time he contributed a series of articles on the subject of Scottish Episcopacy to the *British Magazine*, a high prelatical publication. The same year he was requested by the late Lord Wharncliffe and others, who formed a committee for a revision of the marriage law, to write a series of letters in favour of the marriage of a man with his deceased wife's sister. These letters appeared in the *Church of England Journal* about a year ago, and display deep research on a very complicated subject, great power of language, and an intimate acquaintance with the canons and history of the Christian church from the earliest times.

Having formed a new Episcopal congregation in the village

of Blairgowrie, he erected there a beautiful Gothic edifice for public worship, all the expense of which he was, unexpectedly, obliged to meet himself. For two years he held the charge gratuitously, but we understand that he met with no encouragement in his exertions from the heads of the Episcopal Church, and he, in consequence, resigned his charge in 1844, and sold the building to the Episcopal Church at a very considerable loss to himself.

In January, 1844, Mr Marshall originated the *Scottish Episcopal Times*—a weekly journal, intended for the purpose of advocating Episcopal principles, and promoting Episcopal influence, in Scotland. That journal, which only lived a short time, was the first Episcopal newspaper that had ever existed on the north side of the Tweed.

In 1845 Mr Marshall retired to the Isle of Man, chiefly for the education of a step-son at King William's College in that island. While there, being urged by clergymen and others to originate a paper, he started the *Church of England Journal*, which, we believe, met with good success, but the labours connected with it being too much for his health, it has lately been discontinued. In May, 1847, Mr Marshall left the Isle of Man, and at present resides at Burnside House, near Forfar, the seat of the ancient family of Hunter, of Burnside, the late head of which, David Hunter, Esq., married a member of Mr Marshall's family, and died last year, leaving an infant son to succeed him in his estate.

Among the characteristics of Mr Marshall's mind are—a high sense of what is right, and doing it, without respect of persons; a disdain of servility towards mere rank, however elevated; a thorough integrity of purpose; and an utter contempt for pursuing any object by low or crooked means. These qualities have gained him some enemies, while, at the same time, they have procured him many friends.

REV. JOHN RITCHIE, D.D.,

EDINBURGH.

THE noblest line, perhaps, ever written by poet, is this of Pope's, afterwards copied by Burns,—

“An honest man 's the noblest work of God.”

As value depends upon rarity, so the nobility and the scarceness of honest men are interchangeable terms. We must, however, be a little more explicit. An honest man is not the man who most frequently makes *parade* of his honesty—he is not the man who knows and circulates his own belief in his honesty, as if it were a new and true coin suddenly discovered—he is not the man who confounds honesty with dense and brutal abuse, and depreciation of others who happen to hold opposite opinions from himself—he is not the man who confounds crotchety and impracticability with honesty, or with whom honesty is just a variety of vanity—he is not the man who mistakes a silly simpletonism for honesty: true honesty is quite consistent with modesty, with prudence, and with reticence, although disdainful of all unmanly arts, and of all unworthy policy. The truly honest man is always astonished when he is complimented on account of his honesty. It is as natural to him as it is to breathe, and he does not assume airs, because he has healthy lungs. He is honest without effort, and almost without consciousness.

Dr Ritchie we have always thought an honest man to his own proper cost; perhaps a little recklessness has mingled with his conduct, and brought its usual pains and penalties along with it. But whenever a man suffers for his honesty, we may fairly conclude it to be sincere, even if wrong-headed

and eccentric. That Dr Ritchie has suffered is evident, in the fact that one of the cleverest men in the United Presbyterian body has one of the smallest congregations, and about the least clerical influence.

Dr Ritchie is certainly, if not a great, a very extraordinary man. Like Brougham and Wilson, he might have been great, but is only extraordinary. This distinction is often expressed, but seldom explained. Its explication seems to lie in this,—an extraordinary man is a man with strong capacities of, and tendencies to, greatness, but without the moral energy of will and perseverance necessary to complete its attainment. He has varied faculties, but no one consecrating and uniting object. He is one whose extraordinary powers or attainments are counteracted by some deficiency, which, if natural, he might have cured, which, if not, he need not have acquired. Like the prince in the fairy tale, he is well mounted, nobly accoutred, high in heart, and seemingly able to take the mountain at a spring, but cannot resist one or other of the contemptible voices which surround his ascent—perhaps pleasure allures him, and you see not a gnat but a giant drowned in a bowl of treacle; or he follows some bypath of ambition, and breaks his neck over a precipice, which a blind beggar would have shunned; or some paltry chagrin makes him sulk and sink while within a step of the summit; or enacting a small misanthropy, he sits down, not like Jonah under a withered gourd, but under a frosted *sourock*; or he sacrifices the most eminent opportunities of usefulness and distinction to the enjoyment of a noonday nap, deepening into an eternal slumber; or he scatters himself to nothing, straddling across the whole breadth of the way, instead of keeping a straight, strenuous, ascending course. Such is too often the history of extraordinary men, even when they do not, like our Byrons and Shelleys, rush off along the wild ways of danger and destruction.

It is not very easy, nor, perhaps, graceful, for us to specify the cause why Dr Ritchie, so decidedly extraordinary, is not a great man. Perhaps it is owing to a certain fatal facility of speech which besets him, or to a want of due concentration and cultivation of his very remarkable powers. He has more

elements of popularity and usefulness than almost any man in his church. A strong, clear, rapid, and instinctive intellect, a rich inventive fancy, unrivalled fertility, and originality of humour, a thorough command of strong, rough, picturesque language (every third word *his own*), a rare readiness of utterance, an easy natural address, and a striking personal presence, are all characteristic of him. No speaker living has more power (when he does justice to himself) over a common Scottish audience. He cannot, indeed, start their tears—those who sit under him dwell in Egypt, a place where there is no rain; but he can convince their understanding through the sheer power of common sense; he can rouse and wield all their coarser passions; he can delight them with the full flood of his native, nervous eloquence; and he can excite them almost to delirium with his rich, riotous humour. More refined and fastidious assemblies, even while shrinking from his occasional coarseness, his homely phrases, and his broad Scotch, are compelled to admit the vigour and fertility of his mind. We have sometimes thought that were there still a *Scottish Parliament*, Dr Ritchie might have been its *facile princeps*. We know no man better qualified, by his powers of readiness, acuteness, determination, energy, and rough national humour, for opposition leader in such an assembly.

Dr Ritchie, as a preacher, is one of the most unequal we ever heard. He is one of the best and one of the worst. We have heard him preach sermons for which the term “drivel” was too complimentary; and we have heard him preach in the most interesting, instructive, and masculine style. The reason of this inequality is, we suspect, neither more nor less than want of proper preparation. He is not a man of moods and moments. Enjoying high health and animal spirits, he ought always to be alike. Able to preach with little preparation, he ought the less on that account to neglect any; and although an admirable extempore speaker, he seldom shines in extempore preaching. His extempore style in the pulpit is extremely loose, dry, didactic, and pointless. The poet says that “Easy writing’s curst hard reading;” and we can testify from experience that it is no easy matter to listen to his easy prelec-

tions, especially for those who, admiring his talents to enthusiasm, are the more mortified at the little account to which often they are turned.

In his platform exhibitions, there is less, though still a little, of the same inequality. But there he is surrounded by an atmosphere of influence peculiarly suited to his temperament. Three cheers awaken intellect, laughter provokes wit, and a circle of shining faces makes his own face to gleam—as it were the face of an angel. In the pulpit, his organ of humour is always under severe restraint. We sat under his ministry for several years, and never remember him perpetrating a deliberate jest, except once, while recapitulating his particulars, having forgotten one, he said, scratching his head, “No wonder, my friends, though you forget my discourses, since I can’t remember them myself.” But on the platform, Presbytery, or Synod, his fancy and humour have free scope, and often run riot with him. His hits, cuts, side slashes, and downright blows, are all-powerful, and would make him an object of fear and hatred, were it not for that air of irrepressible good humour which tempers and tunes them all.

Dr Ritchie is capable, in certain circumstances, of very high flights of eloquence. We have heard him, even before unfriendly audiences, so speaking as to wring out from them convulsive rapture, and unwilling cheers. We allude especially to a speech at an Edinburgh meeting in 1832, in support of Lord Stanley’s Irish education measure—the clangorous eloquence of which made some of his bitterest enemies admire—elicited from the general audience more cheers than we ever heard in the same space of time, and still reverberates in our ears. Similar bursts have not been unfrequent in his history. Even when Dr Andrew Thomson spoke, and in his highest vein, Ritchie has sometimes been admitted to tread very hard on his heels. We remember, for instance, how at that celebrated occasion, when the great Anti-Apocryphist, transcending himself, and standing large and luminous in the light of approaching death, uttered the memorable words, “There is a reward for my exertions here, and a reward for them yonder;” he had been preceded, and doubtless stimulated, by one of Ritchie’s very happiest displays.

Dr Ritchie, like many orators, is much influenced by opposition. He is never so great as when facing a multitude of foes. We have seen him repeatedly standing alone, against a whole Synod, like a lion begirt by the dogs of an African village. On one occasion, we have been told, that single-handed he resisted the passing of an address to George the Fourth, and in the course of his speech mangled the character of that crowned abortion with the force, freedom, and terrible gusto of a Junius. A controversy in reference to the admission of the public to hear the trials of students, elicited from Ritchie some of his richest and most powerful eloquence. We heard him at a Glasgow Synod, in 1830, pour forth, around the very insignificant text he had chosen (the admission of the public to hear students' sermons), a two hours' flood of wit, acuteness, and eloquence, such as it has not often been our privilege to hear.

To balance fair in every quarter, we must admit that Dr Ritchie's brain is rather largely developed in the organ of combativeness. It is famous sport for him to catch doctors in divinity tripping, to abate and abolish would-be big men, and to cast a strong light upon that single step which divides the doctor or divine from the dunce or driveller. But along with this unlucky propensity, he possesses a quality rarely to be met with. He uniformly sides with the losing party. A brawny pugilist, he stands over the *downed man*, and challenges all comers in his behalf. He does so from a natural impulse, which reflects credit at once on the perspicacity of his intellect and on the warmth of his heart.

Dr Ritchie has written a few pamphlets and sermons more or less characteristic of his nature. His Sermon on the Death of George the Fourth is a refreshing bit of radicalism, rising here and there into real eloquence and power. His Sermons on Liberty of Conscience; on "Ephraim a Cake not turned;" and on the Death of the Rev. G. Mackenzie, &c., are all able, though unequal productions. Perhaps his best publication is his letter to Dr Cooke. It is exceedingly racy and vigorous. In Cooke, Dr Ritchie met his match, but no more. If the Irishman excelled in the glittering brass of mannerism, the Scotchman possessed a more native vein of humour, and a

truer, if not such a brilliant fancy. Overpowered in Paddyland by Cooke, Ritchie, Antæus-like, no sooner touched his natal soil than he repaid his defeat with interest.

Dr Ritchie, in private, is one of the most agreeable, frank, and buoyant of human beings. He is a perpetual boy. A certain radiant youth of feeling, fancy, and thought, dwells around him. Wherever he goes, like Spring, he makes all things green and gay. Give him but half an hour, and he'll convert his fiercest enemy into a friend. His conversation is ever lively, fresh, and interesting, full of illustration, of acute remark, and of ready humour. An acute observer may, however, notice traces of imperfect culture, of a want of catholicity of view, and sometimes of a souredness of feeling. Still all admit him to be one of the most delightful of companions, and one of the truest of friends.

His acquirements are highly respectable. He is especially an excellent Latin scholar, and garnishes his pages with frequent extracts from the Latin poets. His style is full of oddities, but they are the oddities of a scholar and a man of genius.

His personal presence is singular. An eccentric divine in the east of Scotland once, at a soiree, indicated his points (in his presence) with the precision of a lion-showman. His brow was the dome of thought, the palace of the soul. There was genius even in his large grey whiskers. His eye possessed a peculiarly roguish twinkle. His very hat was significant. The scene is said to have been exceedingly rich—600 people dying of laughter while one queer character was describing another from the crown of his head even to the sole of his foot.

NOVEMBER 4, 1848.

REV. W. M'GILVRAY, D.D.,

FREE ST MARK'S, GLASGOW.

MANY of the changes constantly recurring are grateful to man, and tend to relieve the monotony of an unvarying uniformity. Though some may sentimentally long for perpetual summer, the change of seasons adds not a little to human comfort. There was much in the promise that while earth remaineth, summer and winter, spring and harvest, day and night, should not cease. Each of these seasons is linked with innumerable pleasurable associations, and the obliteration of any one of them would extinguish a large portion of human happiness. But man seeks the permanent as well as the fluctuating. He feels within him the movements of a spirit whose existence is independent of the changes of time, and whose aspirations go out after the unchanging and eternal. He casts his mind backward, and he is delighted with what he finds a thousand, or even a hundred years old. He looks forward, and the thought that what now occupies his attention and his affections will remain throughout all duration, cheers his downcast hours, and makes his heart exult with joy. On a Sabbath morning the devout mind would place the stamp of immortality on all its surveys. It wishes to fix its regard on what will never feel the decay of years, or the mutability of a material creation. What great thoughts must occupy the intelligent mind in such a place of worship as that whose name heads these remarks! Around that edifice the dust of several generations is watched with the grey grave-stones which, despite the waste and wear of external forces, retain the names and dates of the existence of those who have disappeared from earth. The erection,

itself, tells of days gone by, when party names were less known. Within these blackened walls the devout mind, after meditating among the tombs, and reflecting on the state of those now sleeping in the dust, will look for objects permanent on which to dwell. As the service proceeds, it is delighted to find truth—old truth—the truth of God, still demanding its regards. The material world it sees waxing old as a garment—the moth and rust are robbing material objects of their fair forms—human opinion itself is fleeting and fluctuating, but the word of God endureth for ever. The promulgators of it may depart from the truth and follow fables, but truth still remains, and it has only to be seen to be recognised and loved. The pews may be filled with other occupants—the pulpit may have been filled with men of different minds and different views, but novelty has only its day, and the good old way, and good old truth, again appears, and the mind, sick of vain fables, fastens on the word, and finds repose and refreshment. Besides finding truth in its own majesty—truth that commends itself to every man's conscience—truth that has less to do with the imagination and fancy than with the heart and mind—the associations of the place are many of them of a pleasant kind. The preacher has travelled to other lands, and mingled with another people, but he returns not to promulgate novelties—not to declare great discoveries—not to preach another faith than that he had taught in his earlier days, but to repeat the same truth he had formerly taught, and to enforce it with new and more urgent considerations. In the new world he found nothing new which affects man's moral state and future destiny, but there he has received fresh vigour to his former faith, and renewed ardour to his former feelings. How pleasant it is to be annoyed with no new doctrines which require a lifetime to defend them! and then, after they have been defended, how mortifying to discover they were not worth defending! The Bible seldom defends its opinions. It makes its boldest statements, and leaves them to defend themselves. It states, for instance, what are God's perfections, but it defends them with no argumentation. It affirms man's lost state, and leaves universal experience to prove the fact. It reveals a Saviour, but it institutes no comparison between him and other deliverers. It

declares a free Spirit, and leaves his agency and influence to reveal themselves in human experience. Doctrines, like virtue, which require defending, are not worth having. We state it to the honour of the subject of our sketch, that his doctrines require no elaborate defence. Strong in the consciousness of their rectitude, he allows them to commend themselves. Conscious that he preaches the faith that sustained martyrs and confessors—the faith of prophets and apostles—the faith that cheered the life and soothed the death-bed of believers in every age—his preaching carries with it an air of truth and authority which no crotchets of human invention can ever assume. The only thing we were in doubts about was the state of the building where worship is conducted. We have sometimes defended an old building for the sake of its antiquities, but we could make but a sorry defence of the building in question. If its rubbish and its stones must needs be venerated, let them remain; but we know not why the walls should not be cleaned, and the roof renewed, and the pews cleared out and replaced with others. No one can respect a board because it is being eaten with worms or loaded with dust. Old pews are well enough in their way, but they need not be allowed to bury a congregation, so as to render it almost invisible.

On Sabbath last, at eight minutes past eleven, the subject of our sketch entered his pulpit, and gave out, as matter for praise, the first four verses of the 16th Psalm. He then prayed fully twenty minutes, and this exercise was over at twenty-three minutes to twelve. He then read the 4th of Genesis, and after the second singing, he gave out, at ten minutes to twelve, Heb. iv. 14, 15, as subject of discourse—"Seeing, then, we have a great high priest," &c. He commenced by saying that the apostle, by a variety of arguments, had impressed on the Hebrews the necessity of steadfast adherence to the cause of Christ. In consequence of their peculiar aversion to the gospel as a nation, the apostle, in addressing them, insists more on the duty of steadfastness than in any of his other epistles. He reminds them, in the passage before us, of the encouragements they had to persevere in the Christian life. Let as many of us as on the bygone Sabbath pledged our faith to Christ at a communion table, remember our proneness to

instability, and again consider our encouragement to continue steadfast and immovable. The duty to which the apostle specially directs attention, as we have said, is steadfastness—holding fast their profession. All the other parts of the passage bear on this duty, and consist of moral considerations to enforce it. His first consideration to enforce the duty is the power of Christ, and the second is His compassion. These ideas he illustrated at considerable length.

The discourse was over at thirteen minutes to one, having occupied nearly an hour. After the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed a few minutes before one o'clock. The afternoon service was similar, but our space excludes an outline.

The forenoon discourse, besides containing a great amount of excellent matter, indicated mental power and popular talents of a very superior class. Probably a very fastidious critic might allege that there was a lack of unity in the design of the discourse, and that the mapping of it was imperfect. Such would admit that the chief idea of the apostle—the duty of steadfastness—was correctly stated, and that the two considerations—the *power* and the *compassion* of Christ—were fairly and logically included in the mapping; but the last part of the discourse, or the part on the last verse, was not so obviously included in the mapping. With this slight exception, the sermon was one of very great excellence. The introduction was neat and appropriate—at once connecting the text with the preceding context, and with the people to whom it was originally addressed. The doctrine of the text, as already stated, was neatly announced, and the arguments or considerations of the apostle, in enforcing that doctrine, were very ably handled. The illustrations of the preacher indicated a mind at once philosophical and popular. The train of thought pursued was natural and striking, and the analogies used were correct and impressive. The preacher addresses the heart as well as the understanding. He can unseal the fountains of human affection, as well as command the assent of the understanding, and the decision of the conscience. The hearer, instead of listening to the song of the syren, is aroused with the thunders of Sinai, to prepare him for the attractions of the

cross. He feels he is no idle spectator, but an actor in a scene, the effects of which stretch far into eternity. Such would be the effects of the statements of this preacher, though accompanied with little of the energy of the effective speaker, or the graces of the orator; but, coupled as they are with a ready and a graceful elocution, their effect is occasionally electric. The voice of the preacher is sweet and musical, so that its whispers steal around the soul; but when exerted, accompanied with the flashing eyes—the kindling countenance—the graceful and animated gesture—the audience is fixed and awed, and every heart responds to the stirring appeal, and is fascinated with the graphic pictures which a vivid fancy, under the control of chastened taste, portrays and presents. The only defect in the delivery of the preacher is in the modulation of his voice. He uses it on a very high and a very low key, almost exclusively; and the change is not always natural, nor in accordance with the laws of rhetoric. As there is *in souls* a sympathy with sounds, so also is there *in words* a sympathy with sounds. The rising voice demands the gathering climax, or the glowing description rising to the sublime; and, when the matter droops, while the voice rises, there is an obvious and a grating incongruity. Occasionally, indeed, the voice of the preacher, after it rose to its highest key, fell far beneath the sublimity of the description, or the dignity of the climax; but at other times the matter did not warrant the pitch of the voice or the violence of the manner. A little attention to this would make the preacher one of the most effective in point of delivery. Few, indeed, can boast of a voice so winning, and an enunciation so distinct, and gestures so graceful, and an elocution so perfect. The Gaelic of the preacher interferes very little with his English, though he is said to be a very fluent preacher in that language.

One of the characteristics of the preacher is clearness of conception. He forms his ideas completely, and turns them over in his own mind, till he ascertains their personal and relative character. Before he attempts to present them to others, they have evidently been clearly in all their phases before his own mind's eye. He not only surveys their general outline, but he minutely examines them, and fully understands

them. He seems to study ideas chiefly in his pulpit preparation. Such is his command of language that he is never at a loss to express himself. Indeed those who hesitate most in delivery hesitate more on account of absent or half-formed ideas than for want of words. Very few indeed will hesitate in expressing an idea that they have carefully formed.

There is also in his preaching not a little strong and original thought. He both produces ideas and adorns them in the drapery of a rich diction. He is no mere retailer of opinions. He thinks vigorously and accurately for himself. His thoughts are occasionally bold, and he has the happy art of making himself fully understood by his auditors. Indeed we have seldom heard a preacher who does greater justice to his views. He states them in different forms, and explains and enforces them with apt illustrations.

Dr M'Gilvray is a native of the island of Islay, on the west coast of Scotland. After the usual studies and license, he began his labours as a probationer in St John's parish, Glasgow, where, for seven months, he acted in the capacity of missionary under the late Dr Brown. From St John's parish he was called to Dumfries, having been elected by the Town Council and congregation as assistant to the Rev. Dr Duncan, of the New Church, there. On that occasion he was one of three candidates, recommended by Drs Chalmers, Welsh, and Brown, the first moderators of the Free Church, and the choice of the electing parties unanimously fell on him. Judging from the numbers who attended wherever he preached, his ministrations in Dumfries and the neighbourhood were acceptable, nor was evidence wanting of blessing from above.

While resident in Dumfries, the heritors and people of Urr, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, petitioned the Crown to issue a presentation in his favour to that parish, which had then fallen vacant; but the Government, having another in view, refused to comply.

In 1835, fifteen months after his removal to Dumfries, he was called back to Glasgow by the Church Building Society, to be minister of St. Mark's—the first of their twenty places of worship—where he was to lead in the great scheme of church

extension that society had just adopted. Notwithstanding many obstacles, the success of the experiment was complete. In twelve months the church was filled to overflowing, with a congregation mainly collected from the immediately-surrounding neighbourhood. Sabbath evening classes for the young were opened in the church, and in these the attendance speedily rose to between three and four hundred children. In conjunction with the Rev. C. J. Brown, now of Edinburgh, but then of Anderston Church, Dr M'Gilvray was principally instrumental in getting up the burgh of Anderston schools, at a cost of not less than £2,000; and a parochial association was instituted, in connection with his congregation, which maintained another school, in which education was given gratis to the children of the poor of the parish and congregation, and specially to those who came to the Sabbath classes unable to read. The same association supplied the district monthly with tracts—established a congregational library of nearly five hundred volumes—and gave annually very considerable pecuniary relief to destitute parishioners not entitled to parochial aid.

Two discourses delivered by Dr M'Gilvray in Renfield Church, on the subject of Socialism, created a decided sensation, and were instrumental in a marked degree in abating the *then* insolent tone and outrageous proceedings of the party holding Socialist principles in Glasgow.

In June, 1842, the Presbytery of Glasgow removed him from St Mark's to Hope street Gaelic Church, then vacant by the translation of Mr M'Neill to Campbelton. In that congregation he laboured between four and five years. As one of the commissioners from the Presbytery of Glasgow, he was a member of the Disruption Assembly of 1843, and there gave effect to the principles he had always held, by taking his place as one of the protestors on that memorable occasion. As was to be expected, his congregation also adhered to the Free Church. About the same period measures were taken, under his superintendence, and carried into effect with considerable labour, to ascertain the extent of spiritual destitution existing among the Highlanders resident in Glasgow. His published Lectures on Jude were delivered in Hope street Church on

Sabbath evenings, in the winter 1844-5. In September, 1845, his Discourses on Morisonianism (also published) were delivered in St Mark's Church, on Sabbath evenings.

In September, 1846, Dr M'Gilvray was sent out to Canada by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church, to minister for a limited time among the Gaelic population in Glengarry District; and it was while he was proceeding to America on this occasion, in the Great Britain steam ship, along with his lady—a daughter of Sir William Hooker, the eminent botanist—that the memorable stranding, or wreck, of that vessel happened in Dundrum Bay, on the coast of Ireland. Shortly after reaching Canada, a call in his favour, from the congregation of Vanleek hill, there, was sent to Glasgow, which resulted in his being loosed from Hope street congregation. At the same time he had not fully made up his mind regarding that call, but remained in Canada in the service of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church till Whitsunday of this year. Before that date, however, St Mark's congregation had chosen him to be again their minister, and the Free Presbytery of Glasgow had resolved to moderate in a call to him.

Dr M'Gilvray received his degree in 1847, from Lafayette College, United States.

NOVEMBER 11, 1848.

REV. WILLIAM BURGESS, A.M.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THE dawn of last Sabbath morning would recall to many minds the cold creed of the scowling atheist, which reduces this fair earth to a thing of chance, and which severs it from all those high moral sympathies with which faith invests it. As that morning feebly dawned, no sun, no cloud, appeared over our city. Enveloped in impenetrable haze, it seemed as if the chain which binds the system together had been broken, and our earth cut off, as deserted and desolate. At nine o'clock the chime of the bell trembled through the dense mist, reminding the citizens that the day of darkness was the Sabbath-day, and that the city as such acknowledged its sacredness. At 11 the bells again pealed, and the citizens were wending their way to their respective places of worship. Still the haze remained so dense that objects at any distance were concealed. The ear could hear the sound of the different and distant bells, but to the eye the greater part of the city lost its existence. How cold and comfortless the thought of being cut off from moral sympathies, and being reduced to clods! Yet if atheism can console, it ought to have exulted in the appearance of that morning, when the material world would have served as an emblem of its gloomy creed. But, though the materialism of the morning savoured of the views we have specified, the services of the day offered a striking contrast. On entering the several places of worship, the devout mind was reminded that there are relationships which defy all material change—that there are sympathies reciprocated throughout a holy universe, and which alike despise distance, and darkness, and time—that

there is a chain that binds intelligence to the centre—the throne of God—that there are aspirations that ascend as speedily as in the clearness of the brightest sunshine. Some of the usual material sympathies had ceased partially to act. Light could scarcely glimmer through the gloom, and the sun was shorn of his morning beams; but the Sun of Righteousness arose, and many rejoiced in his light. Thus, for once, those material agencies which generally emblem the spiritual, become matter of contrast. The word of the Lord endureth for ever. It shines alike in the darkness and in the light, but its effects are in such circumstances as those described more marked and impressive. We could conceive of nothing more melancholy than the coldness and gloominess of such a morning being made the emblem of man's moral state. Where is the heart on such a morning which would not fail, if, instead of that gospel which brings life and immortality to light, the people were assembled to listen to the prelections of atheism?—to hear that this was a fatherless world?—that man was the creature of a day, rapidly descending to endless night?—that there are no love, and no joy, and no hope, beyond that which cheers the brief day of mortal existence?—that, in a word, after man closes his eyes on earth he shall open them no more?—that thought shall cease and feeling terminate, and all longings for immortality be for ever extinguished in the silent charnel house? Fortunately for Glasgow, we have no public schools of atheism. It seeks the darkness, and dare not raise its impious head; but there are considerable diversities in the administrations of Christianity. It requires not only the administrations of Christianity, but a healthful and stirring Christianity to inspire with faith, hope, and love. It is scarcely fair to make men leave their homes merely to hear a dissertation on some abstract theme—such as the Being of God, or his moral perfections. Men need a God preached as one with whom they have to do; and a futurity preached as a state to which they hasten; and a hell as what they have to shun; and a heaven as a place “prepared” for a people “prepared.” And in preaching these doctrines, all the powers of fancy, and all the allurements of imagination, and all the graphicness of description, and all the cogency of argumentation, and all the eloquence of the orator, should be

called into exercise. Why should the senate-house and the bar eclipse the oratory of the pulpit? Are the subjects discussed by these for a moment to be compared with pulpit themes? On such a morning it is certainly not very exhilarating to proceed to hear some day harangue on the physiology of man, or on the beauty of virtue, or the things that are lovely and of good report. Such circumstances demand something to stimulate and to attract. Man requires to be reminded of his relation to God—of his obligations to Christ—of his need of the indwelling and enlightenment of the Spirit. Nor are these things to be taught in set and technical phraseology. They are to be exhibited in “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.” A cold unimpassioned manner is most unbecoming in those who deal in the high mysteries of the kingdom. When the theme is redemption through the blood of Christ, and regeneration and purification through his Spirit, cold is the heart that can discuss these themes as if they were common things. Where the service is in keeping with its design—where the power and presence of Christ are realised—where fellowship with the Father and the Son are maintained—where a hastening immortality is vividly realised, external gloom becomes a contrast, and dull melancholy no longer fetters the movements which stretch forth to eternity. On the morning in question we found our way to Eglinton Street United Presbyterian Church. That place of worship is neat and clean, and even tasteful, but very cold. It is well for the worshippers that the doctrines of the Cross are the themes there discussed, else they would have cold work of it. As it is, the coldness of the ill-heated church added another contrast to the exercises. If the manner is less animated than some would desire, the matter is unexceptionable and evangelical.

The subject of our sketch commenced his usual public work about eleven. Part of the 65th Psalm having been sung, he shortly engaged in prayer. A chapter was then read, and a few verses of the 146th Psalm sung. At twenty-five minutes to twelve he read, as subject of lecture, Gen. xl. 1—8 inclusive. The discourse was over at twenty minutes past 12, having occupied forty-five minutes. After a brief concluding service, the congregation was dismissed about half-past twelve.

The following is an outline of the afternoon sermon :—The text was from Rev. xxii. 17—"Let him that heareth say, Come." After showing that to sinners, journeying to the eternal world, the salvation of their own souls is of all other matters the most momentous and important, the preacher stated that, though to secure this was the *first*, it was not their *sole* duty. Next to their own personal salvation, the salvation of others demands their attention. Hence, while in the passage of which the text forms a part, the Spirit, in his expostulations and strivings, and the Church collectively, in its ordinances and privileges, are represented as inviting the thirsting and fainting sinner to come to the streams of salvation, to "take of the water of life freely," the command is also addressed to the members of the Church individually—"Let him that heareth say, Come." The general doctrine embodied in the text is, that all professing Christians, in their various spheres, are bound to seek the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the salvation of sinners in the world; and it is to the illustration and enforcement of this proposition that attention is directed. How then, it will be inquired, by what means are believers to seek the advancement of Christ's kingdom?—to say to others, "Come"? 1. By their prayers. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." 2. By their consistent conduct in the world and in the Church. In the world, professing Christians occupy a conspicuous place. Many eyes are upon them, and their conduct, as it is consistent or inconsistent, is the means of *saving* or *ruining* the souls of men. 3. By their Christian liberality. 4. By their personal exertions. These particulars were illustrated at considerable length, after which the preacher concluded with suitable remarks.

The chronology of the lecture was unexceptionable. Every part was well proportioned, and the whole was included within the statutory time—the sacred and canonical hour and half. All beyond that is domestic time, which, in cases not a few, is sadly infringed on. The prayers were general, and were made up chiefly of Scripture quotations. In neither of them was there much reference to individual or sectional matters. The singing, on the whole, was above an average, and respectably conducted. The lecture was unexceptionable in matter. The

passage discussed was historical, and the preacher, besides eliciting the particulars of the narrative, gave them a practical and evangelical tendency. In several parts of his lecture he illustrated the character of Joseph, and exposed the hateful character of his tempter. Than the history of Joseph, no Scripture character is better calculated to guide the morals of the youth who come to such a city as this; and, on the present occasion, the beauty and the rewards of virtue were not only taught, but enforced by the highest motives, and connected with the most exalted principles. The preacher has no connection with the bawling, thundering school of elocution, in vogue in certain quarters. Probably, in avoiding this school, he has gone into the other extreme. His voice is soft and sweet, and his manner graceful. Occasionally he raises it partially, but in general there is rather a deficiency of animation. He conveys his thoughts in a clear lucid style; but a little more animation and fervour would greatly improve his ministrations. He is rather a fluent and easy, than a forcible or fascinating speaker. His manner can give offence to none, but it might allure more were it a little more fervent. There is a calm earnestness in what he says; and, on the occasion in question, when there was so much of the historical, anything approaching to violence would have been out of the question, but, in the more practical parts, appeal would not have been a violation of taste. The preacher is evidently a ready speaker, and can clothe his thoughts in a very intelligible diction with the greatest ease; but his style might be made more forcible by a severer choice of words, and with a greater variety of idiom. The class of preachers to whom he belongs, are in extreme danger of preaching below their ability. They can preach, so as to edify, with comparatively little preparation, and they are less ambitious to excel than they might or ought. Preachers should not only endeavour to please, and even edify—they ought to arouse by originality of illustration, and allure by the flights of a chastened fancy.

The preacher is above the middle size, and of dark complexion. His brow is good, and his countenance pleasant. In preaching he often raises his right hand and indicates by it the current of his thoughts. He was ordained in 1836, at Urr, in

Kirkcudbrightshire, and was removed to Glasgow in 1842, on the former pastor of the church, Mr Johnstone, emigrating with his family to America. The congregation then was in a reduced state, owing to various adverse circumstances. The attendance was not more than 300, and the membership only 200. Since then it has gradually increased, till it now numbers 800 members; and the church is generally decently filled, there being often 1000 present. The largest increase took place during the course of last year. In the forenoon there is always a lecture; and, in the afternoon, a sermon. The church—which is capable of accommodating about 1250 people—is very neatly finished. The walls and roof are painted marble colours, and have a very inviting appearance. The pulpit has merely the front, and is open at each side. The congregation are respectable, and much attached to their minister, who is exemplary in visiting, and in paying them other ministerial attentions.

NOVEMBER 26, 1848.

REV. JAMES G. STEWART,

KIRK STREET, CALTON.

THE souls of all men are in the sight of God equally precious. The salvation of a prince and of a peasant is equally desired by Jesus, who came to accomplish for his people a "common salvation." Men seldom act upon this important truth. The rich, even in religious matters, are the persons courted and followed, and their salvation is mainly sought. Churches are built for them—ministers of the greatest talents usually officiate to them, and by every possible device their consciences are plied, and their tastes and habits are consulted, so as to induce them, if possible, to be religious. The man with the "gold ring" and "the goodly apparel" has all respect shown him, while the man with "the vile raiment" is overlooked and forgotten. The very person that ministers in a plebeian district, in public meetings and church courts gets "the cold shoulder," for no other reason, apparently, but because he labours among a people who cannot drive up to church on Sabbath in noddies and carriages. The *world* is in the church to a shameful degree. The pastors who are denying themselves most in their work, and condescending to men of low estate, are made to sit, as the apostle says, upon "the footstool." Against this "partiality" within the church we shall be ever ready to lift up our voice. Sanctified talent labouring in the poor and neglected portions of a large city is entitled to the most ample praise. Let such bear in mind that though a fashionable audience will not suffer their names to appear among those who are to address them at a public meeting, yet the great Master of assemblies will not scorn them if they bring jewels to his crown.

The brightest gems are often to be found in the lowliest dwellings. We have been led into these reflections from the quarter to which we directed our steps for the subject of the following sketch. The west end of the city, as being the richer, would fain monopolise everything to itself. Its ministers must be everything, and none save them must fill the public eye. Against this we lift our decided protest. Neither worth nor eloquence is confined to one quarter of the city. The lower portion of Calton is one of the most densely peopled districts of the city. The population are humble in their circumstances, and many of them are exceedingly poor. Many of the houses being old and dilapidated, are, to a great extent, filled with those destitute persons who flock from Ireland, or the villages around Glasgow, for a covert in some poor hovel, from whence they may issue forth into the city and pick up, in some way or other, a scanty subsistence. Happy for them if they find the bread of life when they were mainly looking for the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table. Blessed is the man who takes his position among them and feeds them with the bread of heaven. Last Sabbath morning we threaded our way through the lanes and streets of our overgrown city, and comfortably seated ourselves in the church of the Rev. James G. Stewart, of the United Presbyterian Congregation, Calton. The place of worship is situated in Kirk street. The locality is anything but wealthy. It is just one of those localities where a church is particularly needed, and the original builders of it were entitled to praise for erecting it on a spot where a field of usefulness rather than the emoluments of the minister must have been present to their mind. It was built in 1821, in connection with the Relief Synod. It is spacious and well constructed, and is seated for upwards of thirteen hundred. Though the morning was wet and somewhat stormy, it was respectably filled with a decent, and, apparently, devout congregation. Not a few of them, from their appearance, must have come from wealthier localities than the one in which the church is situated.

On his entering the pulpit, the first thing which struck us, after his fair youthful aspect, was his modesty and diffidence. He has nothing of the air of a man who comes forward challenging admiration, and lifting up his brow to preach himself.

He evidently felt the weight and importance of the work in which he was about to be engaged. His voice is clear, and his articulation is good; yet, in the opening services, it was easy to discover occasionally, a kind of nervous quiver, which indicated the weight of that responsibility which was pressing on his mind. This, however, gradually passed away, and his voice became firm and manly. His appearance in the pulpit is easy and graceful. He is not guilty of that crawling, creeping, crouching manner which some preachers assume. He sets his face like a flint to the audience, and employs a becoming quantity of action. We noticed that he had more freedom with his left hand than with his right. This he might easily correct. His pronunciation is generally correct, his language well chosen, and the emphatic words well brought out. There is nothing about him of a sing-song drawl. He abounds in figurative illustrations and in allusions to incidents in modern or ancient history. The structure of his discourses is original; and indeed the whole of what he says bears the impress of a mind that thinks for itself. The great charm of his preaching is its earnestness. He evidently knows and feels the end of his calling, "to win souls to Jesus;" and everything he says bears this impress upon it. With him there are no long laboured discussions calculated to make men stare at the profundity of his knowledge. He keeps in mind that a spoken discourse has mainly to do with the heart, and to it he is ever and anon making his appeals. He never suffers the conscience to sleep; but keeps it awake by keeping it active. At the close of his Sabbath-day services his audience cannot but carry away the impression that their minister would, if possible, take them all, and carry them to heaven. At eight minutes past the announced hour he entered the pulpit, and, we regret to state, that there were but few of the congregation in their pews even then. Up till twenty minutes past eleven did the pattering of feet and the rattling of dresses disturb the worship. Indeed, all were not assembled till half-past eleven. Worship commenced by singing a part of the 145th psalm. Prayer was then offered; and afterwards, Isaiah, 26th chapter, was read. A few more verses were sung, and well sung. Indeed, the singing was very good. At a quarter to twelve, Matt. xiii.,

10—17, was read as subject of lecture. The lecture, of which we cannot give even an outline, was over at twenty minutes past twelve, having occupied thirty-five minutes. After the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at twenty-five minutes to one.

In the afternoon the service was similar in order and length. The text was from Jeremiah, ch. viii., v. 20 :—"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

The discourses indicated a mind well balanced and well proportioned, but not fairly developed. They displayed much of the best, with almost none of the more questionable manifestations of the youthful mind. They were carefully prepared, and displayed no little metaphysical acumen and good taste. The lecture very fairly brought out the meaning of a very difficult passage. The exposition had more of the caution of years than of the daring of youth. The discourse was neat and logical in its arrangements, and concise in its illustrations. The introduction was particularly good, and fairly stated the historical reference of the text before the preacher applied it more generally. A severe taste, probably more than enough, curbs imagination. The preacher restrains his fancy when he might occasionally give it play. His knowledge of the Scriptures is accurate and extensive, and he quotes freely and appropriately. His manner is particularly good. His voice is sweet and well modulated, his enunciation is distinct and energetic. His style is varied, and generally simple, and he is a ready and fluent speaker. Occasionally he reads his discourses, but generally he seldom refers to his notes. Throughout his large place of worship he is heard distinctly, and no one finds the least difficulty in understanding what he says. Indeed he has the requisites of an eloquent orator, with a voice so musical, and a manner so graceful, and a style so simple, that he is naturally qualified to be one of our most popular and attractive preachers.

He is a native of Strathaven, and was educated in Glasgow University, and in the Divinity Hall of the then Relief Church, Paisley. Shortly after he concluded his educational course he was called, in 1844, by the congregation of the late Mr Harvey. That congregation having heard several candidates, were some-

what divided, and, though a large majority voted for the subject of our sketch, a part adhered to another of the candidates, the Rev. Mr Borland, now of Gillespie Church. That division considerably thinned the congregation of Calton, but, with close attention to his people, and being always found at his post, he has firmly kept his ground, and made slow but steady progress. Though there is a considerable amount of debt on the church, there is as much property connected with it as by its rental pays the interest of the debt. The chapel seats from 1300 to 1400 people, and the usual congregation numbers from 600 to 800. There is as yet no manse connected with the congregation, but as soon as circumstances admit we have no doubt but it will add this to its minister's comforts. We have no doubt but if the people properly encourage their young minister the church will soon be filled, and their affairs will prosper well. They ought to remember that a divided congregation is no slight undertaking for a young clergyman, and that it requires the labour and care of years to heal such breaches. We need hardly repeat the injunction issued to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth;" but there may be no impropriety in adding, "let every one of Mr Stewart's people delight to honour him." Let them honour him by a constant attendance on his ministrations, by meeting him on his visitations with the welcome that becomes a minister, and let them heartily co-operate with him in Sabbath schools and other religious and benevolent associations. Years will tell, if they do their duty—that they did well in sympathising with his early difficulties, or that they did ill in not holding up the hands of one destined to shine in that or some other sphere with a steady and healthful lustre. Nothing is more creditable to a people than to have to look back on the progress of him who ministers to them from his first efforts till he grow grey in their service.

DECEMBER 2, 1848.

REV. ROBERT BREMNER, A.M.,

GORBALS FREE CHURCH.

As the gospel is to be "preached to every creature," there is ample scope for every variety of talent in its promulgation. A Robert Newton, as he walks about Sion, and tells the towers thereof, is not more in his proper sphere than the local preacher who, in a barn, narrates to his unlettered auditory the wondrous tale of redemption, through the work and Spirit of Christ. Nor is the man whose grey hairs are a crown of glory, to preclude the youthful preacher from his due share of work and honour. We have had frequently occasion to point out the aged preacher, who, trembling on the verge of an opening immortality, recommends the gospel with his last, faltering breath; but we wish not to overlook the youth whose young affections and feelings have been baptized with Christianity, and who devotes his early days to proclaim the message of mercy. In the hands of such, many of the precepts of the gospel are taught with peculiar emphasis. To hear such urging the crucifixion of youthful desires—the consecration of the whole person, soul and body, to the service of Christ—and supreme love to God, and subordinate love to the creature, must determine many a youth to obey the gospel. The consecration of the flower of life to the service of the gospel is fraught with peculiar blessings to the preacher himself. His young affections and desires, instead of being chafed and disappointed among earthly objects, find full scope on the great themes and objects which the gospel discloses. After-life, in such cases, reveals a lovely and attractive character. The world having never been trusted, never disappointed such; and

sketch entered his pulpit. After praise and prayer, Lev. xiv. 33 to the end, was read, and briefly expounded, while the explanatory remarks occupied only about eight minutes. A few verses having been sung, the preacher, at ten minutes to twelve, announced, as subject of lecture, Matt. xviii. 15—18 inclusive. (The verses refer to the treatment of an erring brother.) The preacher commenced by saying, that in these verses our Lord gives instructions to his disciples, how to reclaim an erring Christian brother. It is impossible to read them without being struck with the wisdom, tenderness, and fidelity, which characterise them. Well were it for the church were they studied and obeyed. Observe then, first, the case supposed—"If thy brother shall trespass against thee," or if thy brother shall *sin* against thee, as the word is rendered in the 21st verse. The case then is, if any of your fellow members shall maliciously or knowingly injure your character or reputation, or feelings, he is chargeable with sinning against God and against you. The wrong contemplated is not a light or trivial fault, but a grave offence. Deliberate injuries are involved in the words—the supposed offender sins against God, and against his own soul, as well as against his Christian brother. But we next observe the mode of procedure in such a case. The first step is to seek a private and personal interview with the offender. "Go," says Christ, "and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." The admonition is to be private—between him and thee *alone*. What wisdom and tenderness are here! *Alone*, that the offender may be persuaded that there is no wish to humble him before men but before God. But a second step is necessary when the first fails. Verse 16. One or two witnesses are to be found, and another interview sought. He may admit the facts, and deny their consequences. In Deut. x. 15, it was settled that *one* witness was not sufficient to convict—two or three were necessary. But if he will not hear, if he still continue obstinate and impenitent, then is a third step to be attended to. "Tell it to the church." He is not yet to be cast off and abandoned—the matter is to be referred to the church. The preacher illustrated these ideas at considerable length, and then concluded thus:—From the subject let us learn, 1st, That disci-

pline is an ordinance of Christ, and not an invention of man; Christ gave these instructions to his followers. 2d, We learn from it that Christ's object was not merely peace and purity, but the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the members. 3d, Those who oppose discipline in the church, are resisting Christ himself, and trampling on his authority. 4th, Learn how deeply Christ is interested in the salvation and sanctification of his people. How varied and suitable are the instrumentalities he employs in keeping them from falling, and in restoring them when they wander! 5th, How fearful is the sin and guilt of those who have been righteously excluded from the church! And, finally, the passage affords encouragement to offenders to return to God. The discourse was over at twenty minutes to one o'clock, having occupied about fifty minutes. After the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at one o'clock.

The few remarks made on the chapter were brief and appropriate. The passage, which in many hands would have been left meaningless, was made in his hands the basis of very impressive lessons. The lecture was one of great excellence as a critical and practical exposition of the verses. While the scope and design of the passage were carefully kept in view, it was minutely analysed, and the exact verbal meaning determined. The lecturer evidently looks at a passage in all its bearings and importance, and is specially careful to give each a definite and impressive aspect. His mind is vigorous and practical. It has more breadth and comprehensiveness than acuteness. His teachings are redolent with thought, consecutive, logical, and argumentative. The scope and design of a passage he can scarcely miss, as the detection of such seems to be intuitive. Instead of reaching his conclusions by a short cut, he patiently and perseveringly proceeds, step by step, with almost all the precision and rigour of a mathematical demonstration. We do not say that all his findings are warranted. We speak of the general character of his teaching, though, like every one else, he must have his prejudices and predilections. While the subject of our sketch thinks well, he also expresses himself in a lucid, and, at the same time, in a forcible manner. His language is terse and strong, rather than elegant. He speaks

slowly and emphatically, in a clear, sharp, and strong voice. Every word is clearly spoken, and the dullest can have no difficulty in understanding him. He uses no notes, and yet seldom appears the least embarrassed. He speaks like one who, by hard study, has rendered the subject familiar to his own mind. The general outline, and also the filling up, are neat and well connected. He is nothing of a popular declaimer. On all occasions his language is burdened with thought, and not the empty verbiage of a heated imagination. The modulation of his voice in prayer, forms a striking contrast with his preaching. While in preaching there is seldom a note out of tune, in prayer there is a certain modulation which, to an occasional hearer, is unpleasant. At the end of the sentence, the voice frequently falls to its lowest key, while the sense demands its rising. The language he then employs is exceedingly simple, and the thoughts rather common-place. Any one hearing his first prayer would never suppose that its tame common-places are to be followed with such vigorous and impressive instructions. We need scarcely say that the service referred to was unreasonably, unmercifully long. The preacher was not to preach in the afternoon; but how his people could go to their homes and look after duties there, and return in one short hour, we cannot understand. It is to be specially observed too, that there are many servants in the congregation, and such detention is but too well calculated to create dissension with their employers. Despite all we have said against long services, we had a sederunt of two hours, the first six minutes of which were unoccupied. Who could blame the people for being late, when the minister was so? A great number of the people were late in entering; and some who have to mind their domestic duties could not be present at all, as they knew they would have no time between services to attend to these.

The appearance of our preacher is exceedingly youthful. He is about the middle size, and of thin habit. His features are sharp, and his countenance thoughtful. His complexion is fair, and his phrenological development very good. His manner in the pulpit is calm and graceful. He possesses much ease in prayer and preaching. In the former exercise he stands al-

most motionless, with his hands on the Bible, and in preaching he leans forward, and occasionally lifts one of his hands. Though calm exposition and argumentation characterise his preaching, there is nothing cold or uninviting about it. On the contrary, there is much real fervour without fury—real lightning without thunder. One feels the electric shock while the battery remains unmoved; and where there is real mind, the whisper will be more effectual than the loud declamation. Mr Bremner was ordained in 1843, and for a time met with his people in the Baronial Hall. Under his ministrations the congregation increased, till his people considered themselves warranted to erect their present very elegant church in King street, Tradeston. According to a notice read at the service, there is a debt on the church of about £900, which, considering the elegance and costliness of the building, is a small sum, and says much for the benevolence of the congregation. A special effort is being made next week to reduce the debt. During the year ending March, 1848, the congregation collected, for the various schemes of the Free Church, no less than £556—a sum highly creditable to a congregation so young. Mr Bremner is a native of Keith, and studied in one of the Aberdeen colleges. Shortly after he finished his studies, he was called by his present people, among whom he has, ever since, laboured with acceptance and great success. He is attentive to his people, and they are ardently attached to his person and ministry. A little more attention to pronunciation, and an avoidance of provincialisms, would render his delivery more attractive.

REV. J. M'R. LECKIE,

SHEETLESTON.

THERE is truth in the aphorism, that cities are human, and the country divine workmanship. The citizen, last Sabbath morning, was afraid to let the sole of his foot tread the earth—which is God's footstool—while the countryman marched along with easy gait and air, as at every step he scattered the mud of known or unknown depths. The artificially-brought-up citizen could not stir from his dwelling unless a carriage was in waiting to convey him to the sanctuary; but the true dwellers in the country, what care they that the mud or the snow is ankle deep, and the air cold and moist, and the weather chill and lowering? One, two, or three miles do they walk to church, regardless of everything save the sacredness of the day, and the hebdomadal visit to the sanctuary. And then, what a contrast between the two classes when they happen to mingle in the "place of the holy"! The citizen, pale and cold, and shivering, is muffled up like a Laplander, while the country people look ruddy and fresh as the rose, and smile at all the changes of weather, and all the disagreeableness which render the citizen so miserable. Here enters a decent matron of fifty, from yonder cottage, whose only care by the way was to protect her Sunday clothes from skaith. That large parcel carefully tied up in a napkin, is a Bible, an heir-loom, which never is used but on Sabbath. Soon as she has got herself seated, and her dress adjusted, the Bible is unfolded and laid down for use. Then enters a number of young people, the lads carrying their Bibles in their pockets, and the lasses theirs in their clean white handkerchiefs. Nor has the stickler for

fashion any right in such a place, to remark on that bonnet, which was once in the fashion—nor on that coat, whose cut may be deemed obsolete—nor on those shoes, that bid defiance to time—nor on that gait, which might be spared, as a bad imitation of a town-duck motion. And now that the congregation is seated, what can the refined dweller in cities say for himself in such an audience? He may remark on that vacant stare, but let him think of the fresh blood that runs through these veins, and of the simple virtue which regulates that life. He may bless his stars that he can get to church with clean shoes, but here there are warm feet, albeit the shoes are plastered with mud. He may talk of his artificial enjoyments, but here is nature—faces fresh as the morn—hearts light as the hind—and, mayhap, devotion ardent and active. Let not our fine citizens dare to despise these rustic worshippers. These are the guardians of virtue—the populators of cities—the health and sprightliness of the human family. Were it possible to gather all the families of the earth into cities, a few years would reduce the human family to imbecility, and a few more to extinction. All honour, then, to the country for its own sake—all honour to it for the healthful part it exerts on our city population. A perpetual influx restores decayed life, and fills up the ranks thinned by plague, and fever, and feebleness.

But there is much of the attractive about a country church, as well as about a country congregation. The chief ambition of the audience is to assemble where their fathers worshipped—whether that place should have happened to be of cut stone or rubble—a cathedral or an unplastered, unceiled erection. Alteration or renewal is seldom thought of, till the cracking of the rotten wood, or the falling of the ragged plaster, admonishes the worshippers that their lives or limbs are in some danger. But to exclude extremes at present, we fix on a church hoary with years, and yet tolerably sound in its timbers. At the hour of meeting the beadle pulls hard at an old bell, whose voice is more grating than musical, and, as he pulls, the bell rope rasps on some immoveable pulley, and sounds as if some one of the tenants of the churchyard was disturbed. On entering the sanctuary, the huge fabric of pulpit, desk, and

communion chair, are fixed to the side wall, while the pentagon gallery is designed to form a counterpart. The square pews below are decorated according to the taste of the sitters—black, blue, or red—and all religiously covered with rows of large brass nails. Pendent from the roof is the old-fashioned chandelier, whose burners defy calculation, and whose shape defies classification. Those higher and more profusely decorated pews are occupied with quality, while the commons take their places on the table seats, or towards the back of the gallery. An old stove in one end is labouring to heat the house, but its influence never extends many yards from its site, and the youngsters seem to understand how the land lies, and cluster near the favoured spot. Let no intruder enter that capacious front pew in which are chairs of state, and which at once distinguish between the would-be aristocrat and the plebeian. Whatever may be the politics of the country, if we may judge from those pews the people are no levellers. A separation is made between blood and blood, and in most cases the unmarked pews have the better of it. We need not stop to observe these arched sepulchral-looking windows—nor those walls which old Time has painted black—nor those pavement stones below which the mighty dead perhaps repose—nor on those doors, which seem almost everlasting—nor on the plan of the pews, which is incomprehensible. Suffice it to say, that in such a place a decent congregation assembles, and though those youngsters may take a peep of their new dresses, and that fair one may glance at those rivals with envious or jealous eye, and though that youth watches with peculiar interest that pew, and though grandfather is now fast asleep, and the grandson fast following, the audience, as a whole, are grave, devout, and seemingly devotional. Such were our thoughts on last Sabbath forenoon as we visited Shettleston church—a church which, though not many miles from our city, is a very fair type of a country church. The weather, as our readers know, was muggy—the ground covered with snow—the roads dirty to excess, and all the elements of a real Scotch, dreary, December morning were present. As we observed the pilgrims plodding their way to that old church, surrounded with its churchyard, we thought—what a pity if there is nothing but form—if they

have nothing good to expect after such a waste of muscle and mud. As we have said, everything about the congregation and everything about the old church were exactly to our liking, and we had scarcely time to wish for something stirring from the pulpit when the minister entered. His being there at the announced hour we deemed a good omen, as punctuality is a grace which generally combines with others. Nor were we disappointed with the subsequent service. The praise and the prayer and the reading were unexceptionable, and before saying more, we give an outline of the preaching.

At twelve o'clock last Sabbath the subject of our sketch commenced his usual public work. A few verses of the 51st Psalm were first sung, after which he engaged shortly in prayer. He then read a chapter, and immediately after gave out, at half-past twelve, as the subject of lecture, John v. 17—21. The lecture was over at one, and after prayer and praise he gave out at a quarter past one, John v. 21 (being the verse following the subject of his lecture) as his text. (The words are, *As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*) The preacher said that this verse is further proof of Christ's divinity. Raising the dead is God's prerogative. One or two instances occur in the Old Testament in which this power is delegated—Elijah and Elisha—but such a power was never inherently possessed by a creature. Scripture ascribes this to God alone. *Am I a God to kill or make alive?* said the king of Israel. *The Lord killeth and maketh alive.* See now, I, even I, kill and make alive. With God alone is the fountain of life, and to him belong the issues from death. The Saviour here claims the same power—even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. He may here refer to miracles, as we see his quickening power in the case of the ruler of the synagogue's daughter and of Lazarus. By and by they would have proof of this, for he says, *Marvel not, for the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.* But that he also refers to the last judgment is clear from verse 28th, which is explanatory of his meaning. The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth, &c. This accords with many similar statements, as John vi. This is the Father's

will that all that He has given me I shall raise up at the last day. This raising up is severally ascribed to Father, Son, and Spirit, as it is an event in which they all are engaged, and this shows their perfect equality. But our Lord refers to an operation of a moral and spiritual nature—to the conversion of sinners, in which he is the operator. He that heareth my words, he says, *hath* everlasting life—is passed from death to life. To a consideration of this grand process I will now direct your attention in the time which remains of this discourse. We shall consider, 1st, the nature of this work; and, 2d, the power by which it is accomplished. 1. As to the work, we see it is a process of quickening or raising from the dead. You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; and the Romans are requested to yield themselves to God as those alive from the dead. The process is a soul passing from a state of nature to a state of grace—a passing from death to life. This is not to be understood in a figurative or metaphorical, but in a literal, sense. It is really and actually the case with the sinner. The sinner is spiritually, not figuratively, dead; and so, on the other hand, is he made spiritually alive. Let us here inquire what it is that constitutes death. It refers not to the annihilation or nothingness of soul or body, but to their separation; neither the one nor the other is annihilated. Even the body has only undergone a change as to its elements; it is dissolved, but not destroyed. At the resurrection, its particles shall be collected and reunited. Death, then, consists not in extinction, but in separation; and so also is it with the sinner. A separation has taken place between man and his Maker. The sentence was, In the day thou eatest thou shalt die; and man did eat, and man did die. He was spiritually dead. Dead to God's favour, and fellowship, and character and image. Such is the condition of every man. Look at the general aspect of the human soul. By the general appearance of a dead body it can readily be learnt that life is gone. Its prostration, paleness, and ghastliness, significantly tell that the hand of death has been there; and yet though the change has altered the features, there still remain traces of former beauty, and strength, and perfection. The image of life still is perceived among the

shadows of death. There is something in the general aspect of the soul which marks a disastrous change—a prostration of high power—a withering and deadening influence; yet amid this wreck and decay who can fail to perceive its former greatness? But, again. In death the functions of life all cease. Of the dead it may be literally said, Eyes have they, but they see not; hands, but they handle not; mouths, but they taste not. The light of heaven shines on them as it shines on all; but it imparts to them no gladness. The gentle breezes play around them as they do around the living; but they waft no fragrance to their lost senses. No spectacle of beauty—no appreciation of harmony can they enjoy. They who look out of the windows are darkened, and all the daughters of music are brought low. The capacities remain, but there is no knowledge—the channels of communication are there, but there is no sensation. So is it with the sinner. God speaks to him in his word and in his providence, but he is not in all his thoughts. Feeling, emotion, affection have ceased—the pulse has stopped—the heart has ceased to beat—the blood to circulate—the body is cold, rigid, chill. There is no forth-putting of love or spiritual affection. There is only a hard and stony heart; life, sensation, have departed. Hence David prays to take away the hard and stony heart. But, further. Among the dead the power of action has ceased. The dead body feels no emotion of love or joy. So are the spiritually dead incapable of putting forth effort, unless as far as one inanimate body can affect another. Everything the sinner does is an offence to God. All about him and in him is polluted. But, again. Death appears in the gradual corruption of the body. So also is the depravity of the heart progressive and expansive. The corruption of the soul, if unchecked, will continually increase, till man's whole nature is only fit sustenance for the worm that dieth not. Such are those on whom Christ operates. Spiritual death is a separation; but now, in Christ Jesus, those afar off are made nigh. Nigh two ways; nigh in a judicial sense, for Christ has fulfilled all righteousness in their room. Nigh in a moral and spiritual sense, for a character is imparted which qualifies them for fellowship. Ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified

by the Spirit of our God. And what are the evidences of this change, of this life and character imparted? Look first at the general aspect and bearing of a true disciple. He is the subject of a new renovation, and made spiritually alive. We do not say that the change is alike patent and palpable in all; but generally the aspect and bearing of the spiritually alive is such as to distinguish them from others. There is spiritual perception imparted. No new faculty is given, but former faculties are restored. The understanding is enlightened—the will renewed; and hence those formerly in darkness are now light in the Lord. Such begin, too, to feel aright, no longer indifferent, but they love God, and delight in him as their chief portion. Further. Their actings are additional evidence. Their tongues, hands, feet, time, talents, are all devoted to the service of God. Their persons and property are surrendered to his glory. Finally. Progression is another proof of life as really as corruption is proof of death. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But, 2dly, The power Christ exercises in this work demands attention. 1. That power may be considered official. 2. It is the power of merit. 3. It is efficacious power. 4. This is sovereign power. 5. This is a gracious power. The agency and instrumentality by and through which he exercises his power deserve notice. He exerts it mediately, not immediately. The Spirit and Word are employed. If I go away, said Christ, the Comforter will come, and when he is come he will convince the world, &c. He shall receive of mine and show it to you. Our gospel came in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. The reading and preaching of the Word and other ordinances of the gospel are the appointed means of salvation. These are the channels through which Christ exercises his power. The conscience of every sinner tells him that it is not Christ's unwillingness, but his own unwillingness, which prevents his salvation. Every Sabbath-day reminds you of his willingness. Every Sabbath bell peals forth, Christ is willing. On the door-posts, in shining characters, of every sanctuary there seems to be inscribed, "Christ is willing." The baptismal font and sacramental cup seem to say, "Christ is willing."

On every pulpit and on every pew the same language seems to be written ; and every page of inspiration proclaims the same truth. See, then, that you not only by your tongues, but by your lives, proclaim the same grand message, in your being living epistles of Christ known and read of all men.

The discourse was over at two o'clock ; and after the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at a quarter-past two o'clock. The whole services thus occupied two hours and a quarter.

Old as is the church, and rustic as is the congregation, the above preaching will lose nothing by comparison with any in the much boasted pulpits of Glasgow. We have given the discourse at considerable length to prepare the reader for what might otherwise have been considered flattering and exaggerated eulogium. We have no hesitation in pronouncing the lecture and discourse each complete of its kind. The lecture was remarkable for the accuracy of its analysis—the subtlety of its reasoning—the cogency of its logic, and the transparency of its diction. Never was the supreme divinity of the Son of God more intelligibly and forcibly taught. The arguments, though profound, were so well put that the simplest could understand them ; and the discourse, though throughout one elaborate process of argumentation, was stirring and popular. As regards the discourse, we feel that we are in no danger of over-estimating its character. It was in every respect a model discourse. What could be more neat than its arrangement ! what more complete than its filling up and illustration ! The analogy suggested by the text is one of the most difficult in the Bible. What nonsense has not been spoken in comparing literal or natural with spiritual death ? One minister discards spiritual death as merely figurative, another makes it so literal that he reduces his audience to stocks and stones without power to do good or to do evil. Nor are we ashamed to say that that discourse threw more light on the subject than all the treatises we had read, and all the discourses we had heard. The intelligent preacher will observe that the chief excellence of our preacher's mode of treatment was a careful analysis of natural death. Probably no theologian ever so fairly and so philosophically, and withal so popularly treated the article of

death. After fairly stating what natural death was, he had no difficulty in finding its counterpart in the soul severed from God, and dead to all holy influence. Nor had he more difficulty in lucidly stating the process effected by Christ, when "the Son gives life to whom he will." Besides an entire absence of the mystic and fanciful, the theology of the discourse is of a remarkably healthful character. On the one hand he maintains the sovereignty of God in bestowing salvation "on whom he will," and, on the other, the responsibility of man on being offered salvation if *he* wills. On the one hand, he preaches, in all their glory, the divinity and grace of Christ, and, on the other, the depravity and perversity of the sinner. The reason of this healthful theology is, that he evidently has studied the Bible more than systematic theology. He preaches Christ, and not Calvin, nor Luther, nor any other human authority. Hence there is a maturity and perfection about his views. There is nothing in his teaching of that hateful onesidedness and distorting of Scripture to be seen among some modern theologians. The listener never hears contradictions nor absurdities, but plain, palpable common sense.

Besides the excellence of the matter, there is much in our preacher's manner to recommend his doctrines. His voice is sweet, full, musical, and well modulated. His action is animated and graceful. There is withal such an earnestness in his countenance, and an energy in his delivery, that the most profound attention is commanded. He has his notes before him—notes evidently prepared with research and care—but he is not confined to them so as to impair the impressiveness of his delivery. There is in his delivery an occasional hesitancy without any appearance of embarrassment. When he is in doubts as to the accuracy of a sentence, he returns to it with such ease as to please rather than to pain an auditor. His language is generally graphic,—his idiom varied,—his style correct and fluent, and occasionally highly eloquent. He often sweeps along, even when labouring an argument, with such ease and dignity as to entirely absorb and entrance his auditors. But we must refrain, though the half is not told. We feel as if we shall be suspected of partiality, because the sub-

ject of our sketch is young and comparatively unknown. The opinion given is founded entirely on what we saw and heard of him when he was in the pulpit. Of his acquaintance we have not the honour. Till a week ago we knew not even his name; and yet, stranger to us as he was, the above is our *bona fide* impressions of his merits as a preacher. Nor have we any fear of our opinions being too favourable. If years be granted he will yet be much more widely known than in the village of Shettleston. To the congregation there we would say, Prize his ministry, for you have little chance of long enjoying it. In a wider sphere he is destined to move, else the Established Church does notorious injustice to merit.

It appears from the outline of last Sabbath's work, that at present there is at Shettleston, what is general throughout the country during the winter months, only one service, but that service includes much. Without any appearance of indecent haste, there were embraced within the compass of two hours and a quarter, three prayers, three times singing, and two discourses—and discourses which included abundance of matter for the most intelligent hearer to digest. It were well for country clergymen to imitate Mr Leckie in the brevity and conciseness of his services. That he may be short, he studies—a process which will curtail the most lengthy and diffuse. His aim is to convey the greatest amount of information in the shortest time, and to compensate for the shortness of his services by their energy and devotion.

Mr Leckie was born in Cluny, Perthshire. He studied in Edinburgh, both the classics and theology, in the time of Dr Chalmers and his able contemporaries. He was licensed by the Dunkeld Presbytery in 1841, and was in 1843 elected by the managers and people of Shettleston congregation to be their minister. Since then that *quoad sacra* has been formed into a parish. At the time of the disruption the congregation was scattered—a considerable proportion formed into a Free church. Since then the old church has been gradually filling up, and will, in all probability, soon be as well attended as in the days of Drs Bennie and Black.

REV. ROBERT POLLOK,

KINGSTON, GLASGOW.

OF all the figures employed to represent the church of God no one conveys a more striking idea of her strength and unity than that of a city. That emblem is borrowed from the ancient Jewish Church, which observed its worship and its festivities at "Jerusalem, the city of the Great King." New Testament believers are represented as being come to Mount Sion, the city of the living God. The song sung by the Christian Church—the New Testament Judah—is, "We have a strong city, salvation shall God appoint for walls and bulwarks—open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." The city has a varied and mingled aspect. She has much of heaven, and nearly as much of earth, about her appearance. The calm silvery light of heaven rests on her, and the laws of heaven are everywhere proclaimed among her people; but she has occasionally subjected herself to foreign rule, and allowed the conventionalities of earth to interfere with her heavenly constitution. Her people, not content with the new name which their Lord assigned them, have divided themselves into different sections, and waved their varied sectional banners; and hence, instead of the world admiring their unity, it has often been amused with the fierce conflict carried on within her sacred walls. The city, in fact, has become the abode of faction and sect, and lost much of that heavenly beauty which in her early days gained her such renown. One division of the city flourishes on its gate the arms of Cæsar beside the cross. Another section, disliking this union, separate themselves into another part of the city, and choose

for their motto the burning bush. Another section prepare an Act and Testimony, and acknowledge those only who rally round their standard. In another part of the city, the names of Erakine and Fisher, and others, are inscribed on the doors of the houses; and another mention with great veneration the names of Owen and Ewing. Another section have Hall and Carson engraven on their walls; and great numbers, wearied of old names, are making diligent inquiry as to what they shall call their part of the city. Such sectional division occasionally breeds confusion as well as ill will. One section sternly refuses to allow the watchmen of another to enter their territories; while the watchmen, on the other hand, consider the occupants of that territory little better than intruders. A determined effort was lately made by a party to seize the whole city, and inscribe its arms on every part of the walls. The watchmen on the walls do not as yet see eye to eye, but occasionally fall out and fight among one another, when they should guard the city from foreign and intestine foes. The Bible is particular in describing the character and duties of Sion's watchmen. Some of them are represented as blind, lying down, loving to slumber (Isaiah lvi. 10). In every section such may be found sleeping at their post. Others of them are represented as so cruel that when they see danger approaching they warn not the inhabitants; and when the inhabitants perish, then blood is required at the watchman's hand. Yet, despite its blemishes, what spectacle is like the church of God? A magnificent city, with its walls and bulwarks, opens on our view. The solemn stillness of night reigns, while here and there a denizen interrogates the watchman—"Watchman, what of the night?" While he with rapture anticipates the morning of eternity, and directs faith and hope to the time when that eternal day will break, and all shadows flee away. Here and there on the walls we observe a youth, with timid step, walking about Sion, and telling her towers. Here and there we meet a veteran watchman, who has long braved the terrors of the night, and whose eye discerns the day dawning on the distant hills of immortality, and who with firm step proceeds on his rounds, anticipating the coming of his Lord to relieve him from his watching, and to admit him to rest. Some can

see nothing in this city but party strife and party names; but the eye of faith perceives the heavenly, as well as the earthly, in its aspect. God is known in her palaces as a refuge. Rays from the excellent glory lit up its darkest hours, and the morning hastens when this city will be prepared as a bride is adorned for her husband, and melt away into the light of heaven. Among the watchmen on Sion's walls, our attention has for some time occasionally turned to him whose name heads this sketch. He is well acquainted with several of the divisions, and his countenance tells that he has battled it with many a storm. While there is much in his appearance of the sternness which would not shrink from encountering a foe, there is also much of the benevolence that secures pity for the fallen Samaritan. While he discharges his duties as watchman, he calls on the citizens of Sion to be at their post, and quit themselves like men.

Mr Pollok is above the middle size and of athletic habit. The first glance of him gives one the idea of dignity and distance. But for the humour which plays around his mouth his countenance would be supposed to indicate coldness, sternness, unapproachableness. A few seconds rectify this mistake. The being you have met possesses very opposite and different attributes. That face deemed stern beams with kindness and friendliness—that unapproachableness becomes inviting familiarity. You would now rather approach than leave. You are satisfied that you have met one who has seen something of the world, and who has made good use of his eyes and ears. Like all well informed men he possesses ease or self-confidence, and though he has much to say, he monopolises not the conversation. He can draw out another as well as disclose his own stores, and he wishes to make himself agreeable as well as instructive. Those who have read his *Letter on the Author of the Course of Time*, in the *Memoir of the Poet*, will see that these piercing eyes of the subject of our sketch can let in the distant landscape to a mind that can appreciate its beauty. In that *Letter* there are some descriptive passages of much force and beauty, and which betray a poetical fancy and a correct taste. He is “well read” in general literature as well as in theology, and is rather a formidable antagonist in contro-

versy—though controversy is not his forte. He can reason well on points of faith, and discipline has in his hands been very beneficial. He is of an active and ardent temperament, and would rather work than be idle. His discourses give indication of extensive information, and are highly instructive and impressive. Though there is nothing of the violent in his manner, or of the declamatory in his matter, he is an earnest, energetic, and powerful preacher. Like all well-informed preachers there is in all his sermons much to awaken and sustain the interest of his hearers. We do not think he has done himself full justice, else his position might be still higher. What with his information and fervour, and perseverance and eloquence, might he not accomplish! Like all ready speakers he occasionally trusts to the moment, without that careful preparation of *ideas* (for language he is never at a loss) which would thrill his hearers. There are, indeed, few clergymen who have a more intense thirst for literature,—nor is it the mere reading of an author which pleases him. He analyses with much skill both the author and his sentiments, and can, with much accuracy, discover the strong and weak points in an author's character. In his remarks on authors, one is struck with the great amount of correct critical acumen which he displays. He detects beauties rather than defects, and would rather apologise for an author than condemn him. This we regard as an amiable and generous trait in his character. Many ministers have just learned enough of eminent authors to enable them to condemn them. Their writings are defective in taste, or detrimental to morals, or full of trifling, they say. While the subject of our sketch finds out these blemishes, he, at the same time, discovers their burning periods—their deep insight into human nature—their fine fancy—their ardent imagination—their correct taste, &c. Equally generous is he to his brethren in the ministry. He is an encouraging rather than a severe critic. In speaking of them and their performances there is nothing of the detractive—of the sneering—or of the sly inuendo. When he sees the objectionable he states it as such, but he is careful also to observe the commendable. There is an immense fund of humour in his composition, which his sacred duties have induced him to

repress rather than encourage. He is as far as possible removed from the recluse, sombre monastic. He enjoys society as well as books, and loves to learn nature from its immediate manifestations. He has properly modified his book knowledge by daily observation, being familiar with society in its various phases.

Mr Pollok's acquirements are worthy of notice. He has a minute knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, has studied German carefully, and is acquainted with French and Italian. At the examination of students in the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, the language department generally fell to his share.

Mr Pollok is a native of Neilston parish, county of Renfrew, was educated in Ayrshire, and entered the University of Glasgow, in the session of 1817 and 1818. After finishing the gown classes, he studied divinity five years under Dr Dick, and was licensed by the United Secession Presbytery of Glasgow in 1825, together with Messrs M. Thomson, William Arneil, John Young, and James Robertson. Of these Mr Pollok is now the only one in a charge. After being a preacher ten months he was unanimously called by the congregation of Buckhaven, Fifeshire. During the first year of his college course, he formed an intimate acquaintance with Mr Robert Pollok, the distinguished and talented author of the *Course of Time*, which continued without interruption till the death of the poet. They were in the same classes, the one being designated Robt. Pollok, major, the other Robt. Pollok, minor; both gave in poetical exercises to Professor Walker. Mr Pollok was ordained to the charge in Buckhaven in the year 1826. The membership, when he entered on his charge, was upwards of 300;—it was upwards of 500 when he left it. The church was twice enlarged during his ministry there. He instituted Sabbath schools, a congregational missionary society, when there were few in the district except those under the patronage of Dr Fraser in Kennoway. Through Mr Pollok, the psalmody of Buckhaven, though the rudest when he went there, was for years the best in the neighbourhood. He was the first dissenting minister in the East of Fife who ventured to put up a bell. Though he was on the best of terms with the parish ministers, yet being afraid of op-

position, he invited a number of the ministers in the neighbourhood to dinner before they knew of the bell. He made his officer ring the bell about six o'clock, and ask them if it would do them any harm. They quite approved of it; and from that day to this no one has opened his lips against Buckhaven bell, though it is heard in four parishes. Mr Pollok preached much in the neighbourhood to the Relief and Independent brethren, and was the means of creating the church at Markinch. Mr Pollok's leaving Buckhaven was quite unexpected, both by his brethren in the presbytery and the people. He left the largest congregation in the presbytery; his income was then as good as his present one—better than it has been up till this time. He had no dispute with the people or the presbytery. The congregation owed him nothing when he laid down his charge; whatever feelings might be afterwards shown about his leaving, he left many warm friends behind him. He has never published his reasons for joining the Establishment, partly to prevent controversy; but he said at his induction dinner that he must ever be allowed to respect the denomination which he had left. Mr Pollok in his early life was brought up in the Establishment, and became a member of the United Secession Church only in the prospect of joining the Divinity Hall. He took an active part with the Independents in Fife and others, in the late revival movement.

Kingston Church has no debt. The seats let, when Mr Pollok got the charge, amounted to about 60 or 70—now there are upwards of 500 let; then the attendance was below 100, now it is 700. When he took office in that charge, it took all the proceeds to pay for beadle, feu, precentor, and other expenses. Last week the congregation, much to their credit, raised his salary to £200. Since his settlement his people have shown him much kindness, and have energetically co-operated with him in furthering their common interests.

REV. GEORGE WIGHT,
HADDINGTON.

ONE of the objects designed by these sketches is to “magnify the office” of the Christian ministry, by giving it a determinate place as a public instructor—on the one hand, stripping it of that assumed mysticism which would remove it from fair criticism; and, on the other, to secure for it that respect which it demands as the chief means of humanising, evangelising, moralising, and refining the human family. This, however, we assign to the pulpit generally, though, as a matter of course, there is wide diversity of gifts and many different degrees of influence among preachers. The popularity of certain classes is the index of the state of society then existing. In a semi-barbarous state, such sons of thunder as Luther and Knox awaken general attention. To a people whose ecclesiastics are disturbed or unsettled, the preacher of doctrines and of forms will be chiefly followed, and in a refined state of society the man of general acquirements—of polite literature and good taste—will be the favourite. This fact has a wider influence on the success of preachers than many imagine. It sometimes so happens that the best informed people may have ministers who are indolent and comparatively ignorant; and, on the other hand, that a people of slender acquirements—a people who know little of the literature and less of the refinement of the day—may have one set over them, who, besides a knowledge of the immediate duties of his office, intermeddles with all knowledge, and is not ashamed to take his place among men of literature and science. He knows other Books than his Bible, and deems the study of nature fairly within the

range of his observation. To an illiterate congregation the preaching of such a one may have few charms, should it so happen that he deals more in the abstract than in detail. Unless he has the happy and rare art of popularising science, his unlettered hearers will gaze and, probably, wonder much, and then fall asleep. In the times of Thomas Boston superior knowledge was considered a very dangerous thing. Such knowledge was supposed to be derived from the devil, whose scholars were reckoned rather doubtful characters. In our day that feeling, though differently expressed, seems still to exist. A literary divine has not yet attained the eminence to which he is entitled. Few will now ascribe his knowledge to direct contact with the prince of darkness (a very likely source of light!), but they doubt the spirituality of such. They cannot exactly see what the crossing of the *Pons Asinorum* has to do with saving souls. They cannot conceive what use the study of the stars can be, unless for casting nativities, nor the study of geology, unless for collecting fossils for chimney ornaments. God, such find not in all his works, and, of course, these works must appear to them a very dry and a very profitless study, and the minister who prosecutes it cannot be a very spiritual or heavenly-minded man! We are writing of no suppositious case, nor of a different age; we testify what we have often heard and seen. Even students in universities have sometimes such a very comprehensive view of the work of the ministry, that they cannot conceive how the study of mathematics or natural theology can be of use; yea, they doubt what use logic, or even language, can serve! And some who now fill our pulpits have these notions to this day. They shut their eyes against the world of nature and against the world of mind, and satisfy themselves with the Bible, as they say—and beautiful expounders of the Bible they make! Though they could not read a line of Greek or Hebrew, they give very delightful new readings of the sacred page. When they read of Canaan, its locality might be in the moon for ought they know; and the journeyings of Paul, which are carefully traced in the sacred page, are to them as many isomeric lines. The classics, which throw light on many allusions, they despise; and of the sacred literature, teeming from the press, they know nothing, and yet

among the uninformed they are sweet preachers, very learned men—very. In the present state of the world, “the voice of one crying” is more appreciated than a “burning and a shining light.” The dull retailer of common places, provided he has unquestionable lungs, and a face of brass, will find a host of followers, when the man of sterling mind and extensive information “wastes his sweetness in the desert air.” Nor are these statements at all inconsistent with our frequent assertions of talent being generally appreciated. The man who possesses talent, and who is able to show he possesses it, will generally have no reason to complain of want of success ; but then every man of talent and acquirement is not a possessor of *popular* talents ; and some who do possess these are unfortunate in their congregations. Ministers are supposed to be married to their congregations, and it is a question whether there are not more unequal and unhappy ecclesiastical than civil marriages. No system of ecclesiastics can secure against these bad matches. Where patronage is exercised, ecclesiastical matches are formed after the Turkish fashion, where the parties to be married are not consulted, but matches are made for them, and gold has to do with them. In such contracts, of course, we do not expect happy unions. There can be no union of sympathy where there has not been previous consent. The woman who had no say in the choice of her husband must consider him an intruder and imposter. And where is the body where patronage, in a literal or modified sense, is not practised ? No nominal patron may say, “take this man as your pastor ;” but there are leading men and controlling courts that have sometimes too much to say in the matter. To these all give heed from the least to the greatest, thinking that these are the power of God, and hence choice is fettered and misdirected. Probably these are necessary evils in the present state, which the millennium is destined to cure. We are happily ignorant of the congregation of which the subject of our sketch is pastor, and, therefore, cannot be charged with personality ; but unless it is well informed, we have no hesitation in pronouncing the match an unquestionably bad one. From what we have seen and heard of him, he will not appear to any great advantage in an unintelligent congregation. His general cast of mind,

and his love of literature, will render his ministrations most acceptable to those who can appreciate the fair things and the lovely which the study of nature in its gay and graceful and sublime moods, eliminates. At eleven o'clock last Sabbath he entered the pulpit of West Nile Street Chapel of this city, and, after the usual introductory services, gave out as his text, Psalm xiv. 7, "When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad." The preacher stated that the Psalm pointed to a great deliverance. The text may refer to three grounds of rejoicing—1st. The revival of individual souls; 2d. The revival of the church generally; and, 3d., The extension of the church. He near the close said—and we quote his own words—You have gazed upon a landscape under the silvery light of the meridian sun. You marked with interest the various elements that composed the picture. There was the flowery meadow with the cattle quietly browsing; there the winding river, fringed with rich vegetation; on either hand stretched far away the undulating hills; before you rise in picturesque beauty the abrupt crag flanked with wood; beyond, and forming the back ground of the picture, towered a range of magnificent mountains. The combination of the whole filled you with the idea of beauty, not unmingled with sublimity. Have you looked upon the same scene at sunset, when the golden waves of light rolled over its every feature? A heavenly radiance glowed from the entire picture. Did you not feel as if heaven had lent its glory to the earth? You caught the inspiration of the scene. You worshiped Him whose hand had formed it, and from whom was shed forth that glory in which it was bathed. What the golden light is to the landscape, the feeling of spirituality and heavenly mindedness is to the soul. It imparts to it a peculiar grace and beauty—an indescribable loveliness. When the soul enjoys the presence of the Spirit, when it yields itself up to his blessed influences, when it basks in the light of his countenance, its happiness must be great and abiding. Who can look on such a scene without sharing in his happiness? "When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad." The discourse was over at twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, and after the concluding

services the congregation was dismissed at half-past twelve—the service altogether having occupied the canonical time of an hour and a half.

In his introductory remarks, the preacher very fairly stated the supposed reference of the psalm; and after briefly referring to the supposed times and circumstances of the writer when the psalm was penned, he was helped to the nature of the captivity, &c., described in the text, by the use made of part of the psalm by the apostle Paul. The method adopted by the preacher in treating his text was partly textual and partly as a motto. The text fully sanctioned the different particulars, and the words very properly terminated the treatment of each. A mind of a poetical and imaginative order would have taken advantage of the supposed reference of the text to the circumstances of the writer, and represented the speaker, whether fleeing from an unnatural son, or hanging his harp on the willows by Babel's streams, as turning the eye of hope and faith to Sion, and devoutly and ardently wishing that the Deliverer would come to Sion to turn ungodliness from Jacob. Such would have described the Old Testament Church as it turned to the city of the Great King, longing for the Lord suddenly coming to his temple, as the ground of the revival and extension of true religion.

The peculiar studies of our preacher naturally led him to view the subject differently. His mind is practical rather than poetical. He has an eye for the fair and lovely, but prefers studies of a sterner nature. He can enjoy and well describe a landscape, but he has more pleasure still in searching below its surface to discover the everlasting strata on which it reposes. He can enjoy a cloudless sky, but he must interrogate the bodies that roll afar regarding their character and relations. The figures of Scripture have their enchantments, but its facts are still more fascinating for him. As he walks about Sion, he marks its bulwarks more than its beauties. He is not insensible to the movements of holy affections, but he delights more to inform the understanding and assault the conscience. He could weep over David flying from an undutiful son, and sympathise with the Jewish captives as they weep by the rivers of Babylon; but he would rather tell them of what restores

the soul than of temporal privation, and of what will cause them real joy despite the vicissitudes of time. He would not tremble over the loveliness of a flower, but would examine its structure and assign it its class. He would trace the lightning to its source rather than follow its forked path. Thus his mind is more analytical than constructive. Intellect keeps feeling in abeyance. He is a close interrogator rather than a general admirer of nature, and these qualities manifest their presence in his preaching, which has soul rather than heart—strong bones, which some would load with more flesh. He prefers to analyse the psalmist's mind rather than mourn over his position. He descants not on the beauties of the scenery amid which he wandered, but inquires regarding the state of the soul before God. Probably the severe discipline to which our preacher has subjected his mind in his scientific pursuits is in some danger of too much restricting his fancy and imagination. The discourse in question was neat, practical, important, and complete. Had he, however, allowed himself more scope in describing the glories of Godhead when he urged supreme love to it—had he exhibited more prominently Him whom the types and symbols prefigured—had he brought out the meaning of the Holy of Holies, and described the grace and love of Him who came to save, his sermon would have been more popular, and, to a certain class of mind, more profitable. Men of science are in some danger of assuming that the term Godhead conveys to every mind the idea of Father, and Son, and Spirit, and satisfy themselves with an abstract term when delineation of the several persons in the Godhead is desirable, and their several offices in saving men should be pointed out. Science, however, never appears so mighty as when enlisted in the service of the cross—as when it adds gems to that brow which is fairer than the sons of men.

The manner of the subject of our sketch is very attractive. His voice is soft and well under control. His language is terse, lucid, and elegant, and his action graceful and animated. His taste is refined by extensive reading and a general acquaintance with science and literature. In the literary world he is much more widely known than as a preacher.

The subject of our sketch is a native of the parish where

he now labours; but removed to Leith, along with his family, about the time he began to study for the ministry. At this time he stood in connexion with the United Secession Church, in which connexion he received a regular university education. His Divinity studies were prosecuted under Drs Brown, Balmer, &c. Before he had finished these studies, he left the Secession Church, and connected himself with those holding Congregational, or Independent, principles. Shortly after this he was sent to the village of Doune, in Perthshire, in accordance with a wish expressed by a few persons residing there. Having preached two Sabbaths to large audiences, he was requested to continue his labours for the summer months. Ultimately a church was formed, that invited Mr Wight to become their pastor. He was ordained in June, 1842. From that time till June, 1847, he laboured in Doune with much acceptance and success; and, when he removed, left behind him a church and congregation above the average of those in the country. The church in Haddington gave Mr Wight an unanimous invitation to become their pastor, which was accepted, and he entered on the duties of his new sphere in June, 1847. Mr Wight, as formerly hinted, is devoted to literature and science; though not, we believe, to the neglect of his pastoral duties. He is, we understand, a contributor to some of the popular periodicals. During the existence of Lowe's Edinburgh Magazine he was a principal contributor. His articles were mainly scientific, and met with general approbation. We know that two papers on "Glaciers," which appeared in that Magazine, from the pen of the subject of our sketch, met with the warm approbation of Professor James Forbes of Edinburgh University. His name is also associated with one of the Quarterly Reviews. Besides these efforts, Mr Wight has issued several tracts, all of which met with a favourable reception. But his greatest effort is a work entitled "The Mosaic Creation viewed in the light of Modern Geology." Of that volume, which, we understand, is already out of print, we on a former occasion expressed a very favourable opinion. If we mistake not, he is destined, if spared, to occupy a more influential position in some of our large towns.

REV. D. V. THOMSON,

ESTABLISHED CHURCH, KILMARNOCK.

PROBABLY the most difficult duty which any clergyman can be called to perform, is to preach to a congregation ardently attached to its own minister. In the case of a congregation without a minister, or that cares but little for its minister, a stranger may obtain a hearty welcome; but where the tie between a minister and people is tender and strong, the stranger will, by many, be looked upon as little better than an intruder. We have been oftener than once pleased and amused with remarks made on a stranger preacher. What more refreshing than to hear a worthy elder or deacon, after listening to some such preacher as Dr Chalmers was, saying, with all gravity—"Weel, he preaches very weel, but nae like our ain man!" This has been said by elders whose ministers were not known beyond their own congregations. We say we were pleased and amused with these statements—pleased because it providentially happens that every congregation thinks its own minister the best, or, at least, likes his preaching best—and we are amused because the stranger compared formed the most palpable contrast. To a congregation who adores its own minister, a stranger, we have said, has a poor chance of pleasing. Whatever he does and says is contrasted with the more notable sayings and doings of its minister. His sermons, at best, are regarded as a fill up of the time, and it is well for him if he hear no odious comparisons between him and "Our own dear man." The present illness of the minister of St Enoch's of this city has placed more than one clergyman in the awkward predicament hinted at in the pre-

ceding remarks. It is but fair, however, to say, regarding this congregation, that it is greatly superior to many others as regards intelligence and gentlemanly conduct, so that though a stranger clergyman has the misfortune to come between them and one whom they deservedly esteem and love, he is not likely to be annoyed with vulgar impertinence. A few will absent themselves, and a few more will hear with little attention, but the mass of the congregation will grant him a candid and patient hearing. As we went to this place of worship last Sabbath, we had no apprehension that the substitute for the minister of that place would receive other than a respectable hearing, and the sequel justified our anticipations. The congregation was certainly thinner than usual, but prevailing disease accounts for the absence of many. Those who were present, however, gave such attention as to make the preacher feel among friends. Throughout the entire service attention was sustained, but as the preacher supplicated the throne of grace in behalf of the minister of the church, the most profound and significant silence reigned. If prayer united, and seemingly earnest, secures answers, the minister of St Enoch's may soon be restored to his attached people.

After the usual introductory services he announced for his text, at a quarter to three, Matt. ix. 12, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." The sermon lasted about fifty minutes, and, after the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at a quarter to four.

The prayers on the occasion in question were, on the whole, practical and suitable, but there were more than enough of common expressions, some of which are, at best, doubtful. For instance, the expression, "The greatest, wisest, and best of Beings," is a very doubtful comparison. Would any one address God thus—"Thou art greater, wiser, and better than Newton, or even Gabriel"? The phrase is objectionable, because it says too little of Jehovah, who is not to be ranked or compared with any creature, however exalted. Then the phrase, "Wert thou strict to mark, or rigorous to punish," &c., is doubtful in sentiment. Jehovah is strict to mark, and rigorous to punish. Every transgression and disobedience must receive its just recompense. The phrase is a corruption

of Ps. cxxx.—“If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, &c.; but that verse gives no sanction to the phrase in question—a phrase which, more than any other, gives the young especially an incorrect idea of Him who cannot look on iniquity, and to whom men shall give account for every word and deed. With the exception of some of these phrases, which may be accounted for from his former official position, and which he will, by and by, be able altogether to exclude from his public services, the prayer was devotional, appropriate, and comprehensive. The discourse contained much practical and very important matter. The introductory remarks, though excellent, interfered somewhat with the following illustrations, though some do not consider that a blemish. It was remarked regarding Dr Chalmers, that in point of information his hearers never got beyond the first sentence. It were well, however, when there are formal divisions, to steer clear of the matter they embrace till after their announcement. With the exception of a little repetition, the discourse was well handled. The divisions might have been more distinct, but the various ideas were well elucidated. The character of Christ as a physician was ably brought out, and his work on the cross and on the human soul graphically described. The language of the preacher is neat and even eloquent. He had his notes before him, but he is not at all confined to them. Indeed the darkness of the afternoon rendered notes all but useless. However, the preacher seemed in no way embarrassed. As we have said, his language is lucid, terse, and neat, and his thoughts, though not always arranged in the best manner, are important and practical. The doctrinal views of the discourse are liberal and distinct. He represented Christ throughout as the Physician of all who applied to him, and he removed every obstacle which the sinner would place between himself and Christ. There was, moreover, a thoroughly practical aspect given to the whole discourse. The audience was ever kept in the presence of the Great Physician, and urged to apply to Him for the cure of all their spiritual maladies. The manner of the preacher appears at first dull and formal. As he reads the first Psalm, a stranger is sure to think himself in an unpromising place. Indeed, it is not till after the preliminary services are over, that the preacher’s manner becomes

attractive. When he commences his discourse, the formality which characterises his reading, disappears, and he kindles with his subject. Both voice and manner become animated, energetic, and, at times, highly impressive. His voice is pleasant and well modulated; and, as he approaches towards the close of his discourse, it rises and swells, and gives power to his delivery. His pronunciation is correct, and his enunciation pleasant. In a word, the sermon was an excellent one as to matter, and above the average in delivery. The subject of our sketch is a plain, practical, and useful preacher. Christ Jesus the Lord is evidently the burden of his preaching, and such preaching will not be in vain. In person he is of the middle size, and of very full habit. His appearance would do no discredit to the magisterial, or even to the aldermanic chair, as he has emphatically a presence. His forehead is high rather than broad—ideality is evidently small, but veneration makes up the deficiency. He is, apparently, about forty years of age.

Mr Thomson is a native of Lanark. His father, William Thomson, Esq. of Castle Yett, occupied a very prominent position in the county, and took an active lead in the various important movements in his locality. The subject of our sketch received his education at the Grammar School of his native parish, and afterwards attended the classes in the University of Glasgow. He distinguished himself very much in the gown classes, having carried away prizes in Greek, Logic, and Mathematics, besides publicly receiving the prize given by the *Senatus Academicus* for the best public oration in Latin, delivered in the Common Hall. Mr Thomson afterwards entered the Divinity Hall under the pious and learned Dr Macgill, and studied for four successive winters, and was held in high estimation by his teachers. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Lanark, having passed through his probationary trials with more than ordinary ability, and for which he was much complimented by that reverend body. After receiving license Mr Thomson became tutor to Alexander Campbell, Esq. of Dunstaffnage, in whose family he remained three years, when he was unanimously elected by the directors of the Normal School of Edinburgh (better known then by the name of the Sessional School), to be rector of that institution. While occupying that

situation he was a principal agent in introducing the Intellectual System, now recognised as of so much importance in all well conducted educational seminaries.

He gave up the rectorship of the Normal Institution in 1839, and opened an academy in George Street, Edinburgh, which proved eminently successful, and was only given up when he received the appointment to Kilmarnock.

Mr Thomson was presented by his Grace the Duke of Portland to the second charge in the Low Church, Kilmarnock, in 1845, since which time he has laboured there with much assiduity, and, we believe, with much profit to those who wait on his ministrations. His preaching is generally characterised with a great degree of fervour, his soul evidently being in the work, and his discourses bear evident marks of scholarship. He is held in high estimation by the members of his own Church, and few Established ministers in Scotland occupy as high a position in the regards of dissenters as the reverend gentleman under notice. He is also characterised by extreme benevolence of disposition, which sees in every victim of want or misfortune a fit object of charity. The liberality of his views, which spurns the barriers which sectarianism has raised against all intercourse with any except those worshipping within the pale of the same church, enables him to esteem and cultivate the acquaintanceship of many who in church matters conscientiously differ from himself. He takes a prominent part in Church Courts, where he speaks with fluency, and is listened to with attention. He is at present President of the Kilmarnock Philosophical Institution, and also President of the Free Schools. We have heard much to his credit for liberality of spirit in connexion with these schools, which in no small degree owe their *freeness* to his catholicity of views. Mr T. is too much of a gentleman, not to speak of his Christianity, to allow his position as an Established clergyman to influence him in matters of right and wrong; and we trust clergymen of all denominations will avail themselves of the advantage of mixing with one whose proceedings have ever been marked by unsullied honour and open candour.

REV. ROBERT WEIR,

KILMARNOCK.

WE do not mean to allege that self-denial is in this day no virtue and no duty; but certain kinds of it wear a very deceitful, and others a rather doubtful aspect. We do not believe that there is any merit in being swung with a hook in the back, *a la* Hindoos, to propitiate their divinities; nor do we believe that a pilgrimage to Mecca, with peas in one's shoes, nor the more reasonable journey round a cathedral on one's knees, at all likely to please any sensible god or man! These modes of self-denial we decidedly abjure, as alike repugnant to common sense, to the physical and mental constitution of man, and to that moral government of which he is a subject. But there are other kinds of self-denial than those followed among the worshippers of Vishnu, or the scarlet lady of Rome. Even among Protestant dissenters we suspect there is a good deal of mistaken devotedness or self-denial. Among the devotees of Rome the people do the whole of the self-denial, while the priests walk erect, and bless God they are not like other men; but among some Protestant dissenters the tables have so turned that the ministers have to do all the self-denial, while their people fare sumptuously every day. Now we have yet to learn that the Bible sanctions this distribution of self-denial, and yet ministers and people seem to have made up their minds as to its scripturality and expediency. When the people read in their Bibles of self-denial, they think it a great ministerial duty, and to aid him in its due performance they dole

out to him such a living as secures their object. What renders this the more absurd is the fact, that while a clergyman does the self-denial for his people, he exercises over them often a very slender influence. How many have left situations where their direct influence extended over hundreds of servants and subordinates, to be promoted over small bands, who, after they have laboured and suffered among such for many years, give them a piece of plate, and allow them to take their departure! These seem to suppose that ministers should not only preach and teach, but that they are wholly exempted from all duties connected with their congregational relationship. We have always endeavoured to magnify the office of a clergyman; but it cannot be denied that in not a few instances his office is a mere name, and his influence a mockery, owing to unfavourable external circumstances. Well may many ask, after labouring for years to a few hundreds of people, and finding them as ignorant and obstinate as ever, where all their supposed influence has gone. This is not through any fault in the office, but through the mismanagement of individuals—of congregations and denominations. These may possess the harmlessness of the dove, but if they also possess the wisdom of the serpent—it has become a very silly animal! A clergyman, after studying for years, and expending time, and money, and midnight oil, is located by the laying on of hands, and left to his shifts, for aught that his congregation, or the body with which he is connected, cares. He may well have a high opinion of the virtues of self-denial, for it is the chief virtue called into exercise. Strange it is, but true, such a one may persuade himself that he is at his post, a watchman on Sion's walls, and is afraid to move lest he should infringe on the counsels of the Eternal! At his duty, where a scanty people come to hear and retire to forget—where each, instead of being his brother's keeper, is his brother's enemy! At his duty, where the office of the ministry is being brought into contempt, by being slighted and unsupported! At his duty, because some half dozen of conceited novices rule the rest, and keep minister and people in abeyance, as if they were born only to serve! At his post, when in pursuing some honest

industrious calling, he might live independent and do good to hundreds! At his duty, when he might, instead of being at the mercy of half a dozen conceited leaders, sit down in a chair of independence, and engage in what will better the world and himself! The fact is, the office of clergyman has been allowed to be brought into contemptuous question, by bodies neglecting to make proper arrangements to secure pastoral independence. Woe to ministers when they preach only for gain, and woe to them when they preach without it! They that preach the gospel should live, and not starve, of it. We make these remarks generally, though they may also have remote bearing on the subject of our sketch. He left a place of influence and honour, where he could have secured a comfortable independence, but though in his first charge, he probably succeeded as well as any one could do in such a place, we doubt whether his moral and religious influence had ever been what one of his knowledge and common sense could have secured in other spheres.

The subject of our sketch deals in facts rather than principles, and in the concrete rather than the abstract. As he prepares his discourse, he draws more largely on his memory than on his imagination. He recalls the word of God, and makes one part illustrate another. It strikes us that his preaching would be still more effective if more definite. In commencing an illustration, for instance, he states not in very precise terms what he means to prove. The mind of our preacher is evidently more constructive than analytical, and more matter of fact than imaginative. He possesses a large amount of common sense, which, in matters of business, has been found of great advantage to him. When engaged mercantilly in our city, previous to his entrance on his present work, he was considered one of the best men of business, and was very much respected. He also possesses a great deal of practical information, derived from mingling much with society in all its grades, and observing it in all its phases. In conversation he is particularly interesting. On almost no topic is he unable to take part. In matters of business generally, as well as regarding political matters, he is well versed. With the working of all

our benevolent and religious societies, he has long been well acquainted, and the state of the world politically, commercially, and religiously, has long been his close study. He is probably among the most intelligent of all our clergy, and in conversation he brings forward his stores with admirable effect. Nor does he belong to that class of endless talkers who never hear anything but their own sweet voices. He converses, and not lectures, and hears as well as speaks. There is also in his conversation a vein of good nature and good humour, which renders his company exceedingly agreeable. Though he can never doff the appearance of the bishop, he assumes no clerical airs. He forgets not his office, but its responsibilities and duties never make him suppose that he can no longer mingle with men as a friend and brother.

Mr Weir is a native of Ayrshire. He entered Glasgow University at an early age, but before he had gone through all the classes he was induced to enter on commercial pursuits. After a considerable time he again resumed his College studies, and went through the full University course, and also the full course in the Glasgow Theological Academy. He finished his classical and theological studies in 1836, and in 1837 he was ordained over the Congregational Church, Forres, Morayshire, where he remained till 1843, when he accepted a unanimous call to the Congregational Church, Kilmarnock, where he laboured till the close of 1848. A number of discouraging circumstances induced him to resign his charge, but his brethren in the ministry in that town, as well as many excellent people of all denominations, regretted his leaving. An old friend in the ministry expressed himself as follows:—"I should be sorry to lose his company, his conversation, and example; but nevertheless he has my best wishes and my most fervent prayers." Such testimony is equally creditable to the giver and receiver. On his leaving Forres in 1843, the magistrates and ministers of that town presented him with a handsome testimonial of the good wishes of that place, and a very handsome acknowledgment of his personal excellence and ministerial activity. Indeed he has rendered himself a favourite among intelligent men of all denomina-

tions wherever he has laboured. We could have wished to have copied from the Forres Gazette the estimate in which he was there held, and the many golden opinions he won.

As a scholar he stood high. One of his compeers, an eminent scholar in this city, says of him that "his conduct through the classics was one continual triumph." As a speaker, his language is neat and generally accurate, and his voice full and well under command. He is apparently about forty years of age, and seems to possess a vigorous constitution.

JANUARY 29, 1849.

REV. J. M'CULLOCH, D.D.,

WEST KIRK, GREENOCK.

It is difficult to assign a cause for the popularity of some men, and still more difficult to prescribe means of being popular to any. Men of the greatest minds, and the highest moral worth ever adorning this earth, have only, when the frost of years gathered on their heads, had them crowned with the laurel. More frequently, succeeding generations only have owned their claims. A truly great man is in advance of the world, and the world will not make a toy of a thing better than itself—rather does it discard the claim than recognise it. Search the ranks of our literature for the truth of this, and at the grave of our greatest preachers find it verified. Their works shall follow them, and these works “keep their memory green.” Robert Pollok still preaches to a scoffing audience, and John Foster has still his handful of hearers. Men’s worth and talents more seldom win them popularity than some fortuitous circumstances; but worth and talent will alone retain it when gained. The fleeting idol-worship of the ignorant may be secured by a whining voice, a sanctified air, or a savour of eccentricity—a rant, a roar, or a flourish may attract it, but none of these will keep it long. Like the female sex with the fashions, the greatest novelty is the greatest rage with the multitude, and the fancy lasts till a newer invention is introduced, or an old one revived. A great mind alone will gradually draw other minds and hearts around it, and moral dignity will keep them there. The mysterious influence that binds soul to soul, after a first attraction, is far remote from fancy. Its seat is deep in the mind, and its hold over the at-

tracted object irresistible. Admitting all that has been said against hero-worship true—owning its unjustifiableness as willingly as its opponents could desire—that will not in the least diminish the practice. It is inherent in the nature of man's mind—the homage and reverence one soul must yield to a greater is a necessity. It is a something demanded of us. The child might as soon attempt to turn from the law which excites reverence for the parent—the pupil to disown the superiority of the teacher, as the lesser mind to refuse to bow and honour the greater. That homage must be yielded—the more of divinity there is in a man, the more will his fellows note and reverence it; and when other minds and hearts feel its power, will its possessor become what is foolishly termed a popular man! A leader we rather would call him. It is in this sense, morally and intellectually, that the subject of our sketch is popular. He is not a preacher for the million—a partisan—a boisterous agitator of any one thing peculiar. Devoid of all claim to eccentricity, and of too old standing to be a novelty, he is a master in Israel by force of absolute and incontrovertible merit.

We still well remember, though now a considerable period has passed, the unexpected delight and profit we enjoyed on first hearing him preach. On that occasion he selected his text from Zech. iv. 10, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" In the introductory remarks, he showed from nature and science the importance of small things. He directed his hearers to the acorn—to the rivulet—as illustrations of how the smallest objects might become of vast importance; then turned to the discovery of the use of steam and of gunpowder, and the invention of printing, as showing how simple accidents to the human eye, and of apparently little moment, might effect revolutions in the history of man. From these he drew a parallel in regard to the conversion of a sinner—showed how the reading of a text or chapter, the hearing of a single sermon, or of some oft-repeated Bible truth, might awaken conviction in the mind. He then considered the practical application of the text in a threefold light. 1st. To the progress of the gospel in the world; 2d. To the progress of grace in the individual soul; and, 3d. The last application of the text—antithe-

tical to the two preceding—is the progress of sin. These ideas were illustrated at considerable length.

The sermon was far beyond any attempt of criticism on our part. We listened throughout with wrapt silent admiration, and a sense of awe, as seemed the audience, young and old, to do. For days and weeks after, passages of it were ringing in our ears—the clear bold tones of the speaker haunted us—the flashing eye and solemn air followed our waking dreams, like a living presence. It required no ingenious efforts to remember—as is too often needed—the subject matter of discourse, and to tack on to the heads some of the streams of sentences that followed. The simple reason was, and an important one it is, we had not merely been hearing a sermon, but we had been taught. Did ministers but remember this always—that human souls cannot be satisfied with a sermon of three heads, and particulars to match, however beautiful in arrangement and elegant in delivery, but require most of all instruction and impression, there surely would be less pulpit verbiage, and more pulpit teaching.

Dr M'Culloch is not an eloquent preacher, according to popular notions of eloquence. The deep organ-like swelling note of burning thought he rarely pours forth. He is fervid, solemn, and impressive. His diction and imagery are graceful and polished, his voice clear and powerful, and his delivery earnest and unaffected. The great charm of his discourses lies in their intrinsic excellence. No one can listen to him without unconsciously feeling that the incarnate voice is uttering truths worthy of attention, and feeling, too, that the preacher is not repeating a hackneyed lesson, but come with a store of treasure in his mind, giving of it to each and all—giving of it fearlessly, without regard to rank or distinction—alike faithfully reproving sin, as it manifests itself, whether among the rich or poor.

One thing contributes greatly to the success of his preaching—its simplicity and practicability. It is not theoretical, and rarely argumentative. His Divine Master taught his disciples from the lily, from the corn field, and fig tree—he drew their notice to the smallest passing event, or the minutest phenomena of nature. From each object in view he could

extract a truth and inculcate a lesson, which their hearts were not likely to forget. And why should not his followers? Is there a necessity now more than then for abstract theoretical preaching? Do not all things, rightly viewed, great and small, from the humming insect on the wing to the most majestic object of creation, manifest wisdom, power, and love? and is there anything, animate or inanimate, not fraught with lessons to man, in his guilty, sinful, and rebellious state? Is there anything in all God's creation which does not illustrate divine truth, and contain the germ of weightier argument than ten thousand barren theories? And should not the daily life of man—the practices, and thoughts, and customs, the habits and pursuits of public and private existence, be made a more fruitful matter of pulpit observation than mere abstractions? How warn a youth of the snares and dangers of the world—how check the predisposition to forget duty to God—how give an impulse to holy feelings, and how aid in determining the course of life, unless the habits, feelings, and associations of that life are made matters of discourse? With the grand life-giving truths of the gospel ever in view, subservient truths should surely not be forgotten. While Paul preached Christ and him crucified, Paul was ever ready to rebuke, to exhort, and instruct. That first truth was the keystone of the arch, but many more were necessary to complete the structure. All dependent upon it, all acquiring grace and beauty from it, but all needed in their own place.

Independent of his preaching talents, Dr M'Culloch has won considerable literary fame. His attention has been directed, and his efforts zealously put forth, in improvement of educational works for the young. Several of our modern school books are of his own compilation, and display great care and a studied attention to what is most likely to profit and improve the rising generation. His language is perspicuous, clear, and graceful; his style, vigorous and terse. His "Literary Characteristics of the Holy Scriptures," which has reached the second edition, is not only a work of great intrinsic importance, but discloses attributes of mind which do not appear so obvious in his preaching. In that work the writer treats briefly of the Originality, Depth, Sublimity, Spirituality, Reserve,

Speculative Points, Unsystematic Arrangement, and Harmony of the subject matter of the Scriptures, and of the Translatableness, Simplicity, Animation, Parallelism, and Figures of their Style, in a manner which proves that he possesses mental powers of a very superior order. We rose from the perusal of that comparatively small book with a more firm persuasion of the divinity of the Bible than any other book ever communicated. We hesitate not to say that in treating of the originality, depth, sublimity, and spirituality of the Bible, he undesignedly proves himself possessor of these attributes to a very considerable extent.

It has been said that the best of all proofs that man was made in the image of God, is the fact that man can form some conceptions, even in his fallen state, of the perfections of God. Man can conceive something of what spirituality, infinity, eternity, unchangeableness, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, and truth, are; and it has been correctly inferred that the being able to form a conception of these attributes is, to some extent, a possessor of them himself. So is it with the man who is able to treat of the characteristics of the Bible. The man of no originality of mind could give us no idea of the originality of the Bible, and so with the other peculiarities mentioned. It follows, too, that he who can best describe these peculiarities, possesses most of them himself. Tested thus, the subject of our sketch ranks high intellectually, as well as morally and spiritually. The work to which we have referred is unostentatious in its pretensions. It is not given to the world as the result of a lifetime of labour and of research, but as "the substance of two lectures delivered in a mechanics' institution." If such are specimens of his lectures, or discourses, we shall only say that the people to whom they are delivered are highly favoured, and that the lecturer will one day be found a mis-improver of talents should he not give to the church and to the world something that will better them throughout all time. We shall not allege that indications of extensive learning are given—but we may assert that the book in question indicates a mind well informed and highly accomplished—a mind that knows both the letter and the spirit of the Bible—which has grappled with the abstract and the abstruse as well as with the

concrete and palpable. Proof, moreover, is also offered in that book of the correct taste and sound judgment of the author. He selects the most invulnerable proofs of the divinity of the Bible, and presents them in a neat and impressive form. He declaims not against the adversaries of the Bible; but he addresses their reason and understanding, instead of attempting to lord it over their feelings and conscience.

Dr M'Culloch was born at St Andrews, February, 1801, and educated at the University of that town. He was eight years a schoolmaster—first in the Grammar School of Dunkeld, and then in Circus-place School, Edinburgh. He was settled as minister of St Vigean's Chapel, Arbroath, in 1829, and translated to the Parish Church of Kelso in 1833, and to the West Kirk (Established), Greenock, in 1843.

As may be presumed he is a man of liberal and enlightened sentiments, ready at all times to aid and co-operate in any scheme for the welfare, morally and spiritually, of his fellow creatures, whether agitated under the auspices of Churchman or Dissenter. May Greenock long honour him, and profit by him.

FEB. 3, 1849.

REV. THOMAS FINLAYSON,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

THE superiority of public to private instruction, in things both secular and sacred, is now very generally acknowledged. The advantages of public, unsectarian education over that received in sectional schools, or by private lessons, are so potent and palpable, as to need no defence. In the public class, all these feelings and faculties, which stimulate to industry and self-respect, are powerfully called into action, while, in the private school, the pupil, besides wanting the stimulant essential to successful study, forms generally a false estimate of his powers and of his success. In things sacred, public instruction is not less essential to success than in things secular. Widely as the disciples of Christianity differ about forms and faiths, they all agree regarding the necessity of public assemblies and public instruction. They are as ignorant of the constitution of man as of the power of religion, who think that reading a sermon and a church service in the parlour will have the same effect as the same sermon delivered from the pulpit, with its various concomitants. The elements which constitute the difference are numerous. Man is a social and dependent being, and possesses desires and wants which he can express only unitedly, and feelings which he must share with his fellows. Besides, the ear as well as the eye must be engaged in the reception of instruction, and the human eye as well as the human voice must be employed in communication. It was not mere form which made the ancient Jewish worshipper glad, when it was said, "Go ye up to the house of God;" nor is it mere form which induces the thousands of congregations in our land to

weekly assemble. Some may remember little of the sermon, but their hearts are fed. They may not be able to say in so many words what good they have derived from mixing in the great or small assembly, but they know they have got good; and all the reasoning of the atheist and infidel cannot negative a positive good. Many worshippers, who cannot enter into the philosophy of public instruction, can satisfy their minds as to its utility, from palpable facts. They can ask with triumph what anti-church young man has been a blessing to society? They can ask, to whom the enterprise and wealth of this great city are under obligations? Is it to the contemnners of our Sabbaths and sanctuaries, or to those who pay their hebdomadal visits to the place of the holy? They can ask, how it happens that the name infidel comes to be associated with liar, blasphemer, murderer, and every species of crime? It affects not our position that they make religion the stalking horse of their vanity and ambition—that in its sacred name deeds of darkness and blood have been committed. It is so much the more honour to religion that these foul blots stain not its escutcheon, but adhere only to persons. Had it been possible to bring church-going and the other rites of Christianity into contempt, long ago they would have been abandoned; but every man knows quite well the difference between use and abuse, and every one knows that the tendencies of the services of the sanctuary are only pure and peaceable and exhilarating. But though every one must in his conscience approve of the public services of religion, and though every man in our land, who obeys the voice of his conscience and reason, avails himself of their hallowing influence, it must be admitted that the attractiveness and profitableness of such sermons must, in some measure, depend on the efficiency of those who conduct them. All know the difference between a sermon conducted in a dull and perfunctory manner, and one done *con amore*. All know the difference between a sermon conducted by one who cannot feel, and who has no power to think, and one whose eye flashes, and whose feelings overflow as he utters vigorous thought in words that burn. It is probably wisely arranged that one becomes naturally blind to the faults of those with whom he constantly mingles. But for

this the amount of domestic as well as congregational unhappiness would be vastly greater than it is. Even persons of real discernment and shrewdness begin to overlook the failings of their "ain dear man," if not to enshrine them among the virtues. It is different, however, with others. The person who undertakes an occasional service should be sure that he possesses general as well as local influence. There are only a few ministers who can boast anything like general acceptability. Each is a light in his own sphere; but most out of that sphere cease to shine. Every denomination, however, has its few stars, which shine steadily in their own place, and can shoot across the ecclesiastical hemisphere, shedding a healthful and cheering influence. Men view them not as omens of evil, but as messengers of mercy, and are willing for a season to rejoice in their light. Among those who shine in other pulpits as well as their own, in the United Presbyterian Church, the clergyman whose name heads these remarks has, for a considerable time, occupied a prominent place. His name is pretty generally known in the west of Scotland, and his visits secure crowded congregations. Last Sabbath evening the announcement of his name, as evening preacher in Renfield Street United Presbyterian Church (Rev. Dr Taylor's), induced us to visit that place. At the hour of meeting, notwithstanding an unusual number of sermons in our city, a large audience was collected in that truly magnificent and tasteful building. At twenty-five minutes to seven he entered the pulpit, and after the usual introductory services, he announced, at five minutes past seven, 2 Corinthians v. 19, 20, as his text. The words on which he founded his discourse were, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," and "we pray you, be ye reconciled to God." After a few observations, the preacher remarked, that we have here both the fact and the method of reconciliation. The fact, that God is reconciling the world, and the method, that he *is in Christ* reconciling the world—but we shall not separate these ideas. We consider the exhortation, "Be ye reconciled to God." The two great points we wish to impress are, 1st, The grounds on which God is reconciled to men; and, 2d, How men are reconciled to God—it is only in Christ. These ideas he illustrated at length. The

discourse was over at fourteen minutes to eight, having occupied about forty minutes. After the concluding services the congregation was dismissed at a few minutes past eight. The entire service was gone through within the statutory time—an hour-and-a-half.

The introductory services on this occasion were apt to give one an incorrect idea of the preacher. Coldness, austerity, and authority, seemed to conceal other attributes. He read his verses correctly, but coldly. He engaged in prayer somewhat abruptly and tersely. The language was correct—the words well chosen—but the devotional was probably not in the ascendant. It was not until he had considerably advanced in his discourse that the fountains of feeling were unsealed and began to flow. Still, it is not the tender nor the pathetic which is his forte. There is little of the soft either in his mind or voice. The intellectual bears the sway over the feelings, and yet in his discourse there is no lack of urgent and eloquent appeal. His appearance, when preaching, is that of one thoroughly conscious of his preaching powers. No manuscript lies before him, but he has no misgivings of memory or self-possession. He commences to preach like one who is really master of his subject, and who sees before him an irradiated pathway. The sermon was an admirable specimen of an occasional discourse. In preparing these the preacher should always assume that some will be present who are ignorant of the first principles of the gospel, and who will rather *hear* a stranger than one whose instructions, through custom, fall on many a dull ear, without making any impression. On this occasion the preacher gave such an epitome of the gospel, that he who listened with attention might have learned all that was necessary to be known of the way of acceptance and reconciliation. The preacher gave a lucid view of reconciliation, objectively and subjectively considered—objectively, as regards removal of legal obstructions in the way of forgiveness on the part of God; and subjectively, as removing the enmity from the sinner's mind, and making him submit to the righteousness of God. He made redemption appear in its magnitude, as at once vindicating the righteousness and mercy of God. He was careful also to show that the way of reconciliation was in and

through Christ, and that union with Christ by faith is as necessary as the objective work accomplished on the cross. On the second head of discourse—the exhortation—the preacher assumed that obstinacy, rather than ignorance, prevents reconciliation. He deemed it not necessary to explain the way in which a sinner receives and rests on Christ—he properly assumed that were the fears and the hopes of men awakened—that did they feel the matter of salvation one of life and death, there would be no need to discuss the nature of faith any more than did Philip explain it to the Ethiopian eunuch. All discussions on the nature of faith are ingenious trifles to divert the sinner from “laying hold of the hope set before him.” The preacher urged reconciliation in highly eloquent and impassioned language. There was probably enough of the awful, but the preacher adhered generally to the language of Scripture as he urged the “terrors of the Lord.” He also interspersed the threatenings with promises of mercy. The cloud which hovered over the audience showed a bright as well as a dark side. Such earnest and urgent pleading is too seldom resorted to in our day. It is thought all right that Methodism and Morisonianism have their terrors and their remonstrances, but in other bodies the didactic is more respectable. When such discourses as the one referred to cease to be preached in any one body its utility is gone. When ears polite cannot tolerate faithful dealing, Ichabod becomes the most suitable inscription for such a church. Would that such a discourse were preached in pulpits accustomed only to the dulcet sounds of peace, peace!

There was one part of the discourse which probably admits a different view than that taken by the preacher. There can be no question that the man who stands forward as an ambassador of Christ—sent to negotiate affairs between God and man—occupies a high vantage ground. The ambassador from an earthly sovereign is held sacred, and much more that of the King of kings. Some, however, are of opinion that the term, as used in the text, can apply only to apostles who saw Christ, and derived their authority immediately from him. Dr. Wardlaw, whose views were alluded to in another part of this discourse, reasons very cogently on the impropriety of any man not an apostle, calling himself the ambassador of God. There

can be no doubt but every faithful minister is called of God to his work, but probably modesty should prevent any uninspired man from asserting he has that authority. It is clear, at least, that the term is not applied or used by any, unless inspired men, in the Scriptures. Probably the term "earthen vessel" is as appropriate to men who can lay no claim to immediate inspiration. On this subject, however, there is diversity of opinion, and we suggest rather than dogmatise.

Mr. Finlayson is a native of Perthshire. He was born near Doune, and brought up in the congregation of the Rev. Dr. M'Kerrow, Bridge-of-Teith. He was educated at the University of Glasgow, ordained in Greenock in 1835, and removed to Rose Street, Edinburgh, in the autumn of 1847. He possesses great practical sagacity and tact. He takes a powerful grasp of a subject, and, at the same time, possesses a qualification not always found conjoined with this, the art of laying out his subject not only clearly, but very neatly, or, to use a colloquial expression, *knackty*.

He excels in handling practical subjects. When he preaches from home he usually selects some practical rather than doctrinal topic. His practical talent was shown in his own congregation in Greenock, in his training of his people to habits of liberality which were equalled by few congregations. It was a new congregation, composed of a mere handful of people, by no means wealthy, and burdened with a large debt. When Mr Finlayson left them, they were entirely free of debt, having just completed the payment of the last thousand pounds in less than two years. They then numbered about 330 members. When the debt was reduced to £1000, they were disposed to rest there, thinking they had done well. But he had another object in view, and, without saying anything about the matter, he went out one morning, determined to finish the day in one resolute campaign; and, taking the members of the congregation just in the order of their residences, he procured, in the course of a few days, subscriptions to the amount of £1200, which cleaned and painted the church as well as paid the debt. He was one of the deputies sent throughout the country to visit weak congregations, and to make arrangements for supplementing the ministers' stipends;

and the singular tact and dexterity he manifested on these occasions, in removing the objections of the people to draw their purse strings, surpassed anything of the kind, and brought him prominently before the public.

Mr Finlayson is modest, and never obtrudes himself on the notice of the public—requiring always to be brought forward. He does not often speechify in the church courts, and never for the purpose of display. It would be well if his example were followed by certain everlasting talkers, who are a nuisance and pest to both presbyteries and synods, and who seem to think that no question can be decided until they have made a speech upon it, though they frequently do little else than repeat what has been said, and said much better, by others.

FEB. 10, 1849.

REV. JAMES MORISON,

KILMARNOCK.

SOME two or three months ago we read on the walls of a provincial city the following advertisement :—" The Rev. James Morison, of Kilmarnock, will lecture in —— Chapel, on the words, "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" Interested on the subject, and having seen somewhat and heard more of the clergyman, we repaired to the chapel. We found it rather thinly attended, nor was the audience more select than numerous. It consisted principally of young women and men of the lower ranks. Speedily the hero of the evening appeared. His appearance in the pulpit is imposing. His brow is lofty, and his head large. His lower features are not equal. It is as if Nature had begun to build a magnificent structure, but got wearied, and was less careful of the lower part. His eyes are small, and deficient in fire. But all this, from the distance of the pulpit, is less noticeable, and the towering forehead redeems the whole. After a short, earnest, and singularly simple prayer, he began to read his lecture. And certainly it was throughout a most ingenious and elaborate production. Its language, if not terse or classic, was very fluent and forcible. And it was assuredly, as a *piece of reading*, almost perfect—calm, clear, distinct, graceful, and musical throughout, it rose at times into rich, yet measured swells. If, as a composition, scarcely overpowering in eloquence or thought, it was singularly clear, forcible, and vivid. The few figures introduced were not, we thought, eminently felicitous, and there was a slight, sweet monotony in the uniform fall and rise of his voice and sentences, which gave rather an artificial

air to the whole. It was, nevertheless, a striking and effective display. With regard to his treatment of the difficult passage, we thought that he left it and the cognate subjects precisely where he found them. The "crystal bar" did not move to his magic. Necessity would not bow her awful head to his "law." The "Potter's clay" remained as stiff as ever in his hands. He merely shifted the Gordian knot a little way back the rope. He did not cut it, and it seemed to hang and toss somewhat discontented at the useless disturbance. Instead of setting free the bird, he altered the position of the cage. The clay, he said, had been marred in the hands of the Potter, but he did not answer the questions, *By whom, how, and wherefore* was it so marred?

James Morison is, undoubtedly, a very remarkable man. His main qualities are vigour of intellect, energy of temperament, extent of reading, and invincible perseverance of character. His mind is of the strong logical, rather than of the subtle or intuitive kind. Round it he has gathered, like a panoply, a thick and wide knowledge of theology, Scripture criticism, classical and scientific learning. He has cultured, besides, to a high degree, his powers of popular address, and a voice, originally strong, and a manner originally impetuous, he has subjected to perfect control. Extremely ardent in temperament, he has checked it with success, and it now flows in a deep and calm channel. He has naturally large and swelling sails, but has wisely stopped at every port to take in ballast. His ambition in youth was to gain classical and literary eminence, and we are not sure that he acted right in turning aside to theology. Theology, indeed, has noble prizes yet to be won in its field; but these must be often plucked out from amidst the thorns, at no small risk to the daring discoverer. The divers who would gather pearls from its deep ocean, must be lean and strong, practised as well as accomplished. If James Morison had prosecuted his original *tendency*, he had probably by this time been an eminent professor in one of our universities, or had begun the construction of a large fabric of literary renown. But the enthusiasm of his temperament, once brought under the force of religious impressions, could find for itself no adequate outlet save in the preaching of the gospel.

And now a new dream of a loftier character came over his spirit. Dissatisfied with the meagreness and coldness of common-place theology, perceiving the little and lessening hold it has upon enlightened men, he thirsted after the distinction of introducing a new era into the science. He must breathe on its dry bones, and make them live. He must—with new spangled ore—flame on the forehead of the morning skies, the Luther of a new reformation. He set himself, accordingly, to realize this fond ambition. Excited, too, by opposition, inflamed by what he thought persecution, and stirred, moreover, by a sincere and almost fanatical zeal, he gathered round him many followers, and became the nucleus of a party. Earnest he continues still, but we are happy to believe that all, or most of what was fanatical and egotistical in him, has now exhaled. He has discovered that human nature is not to be taken by storm—that old Adam is too strong for young Morison. He has (would that it had been so with a mightier than he—Edward Irving!) paused on the brink of the precipice, and is fast becoming a wise, as he has always been a pious, able, and erudite man. And while possessing no sympathy with the unmanly and unjust attacks which have been made upon him, and while deeming him in *essentials* to be not very far from holding orthodox sentiments, without the tact or talent of using always orthodox language, we at the same time entertain very little hope of any profound or permanent good resulting from his system. The meteor does not ripen our corn, nor the comet embrown the apples of our orchards. It is not a new and startling terminology which will either revive or defend modern churches. It is not writing the “Fury” or the “Rapid” upon an old unwheeled cart, that will turn it into a locomotive. It is not blowing with *our* breath into the sails of a ship becalmed, that will make it move. We need at present an impulse from above—a touch from the hand of the *Old Master* himself—a breath from the four winds to quicken and to strengthen us.

James Morison is, undoubtedly, much before the majority of ministers, in his knowledge of, and sympathy with, the on-goings of his age, and in his perception of the principle that Christianity ought to go on along with it. But we do not

think him at all FULLY alive to the exigencies of the case. Nor do we think that the system of modified Calvinism he teaches is the panacea for our manifold evils. We should like to see him turning his vigorous intellect and extensive erudition to the questions of the canon of inspiration, or to the confutation of De Wette, Parker, and Strauss. It is notorious that British theologians are babes compared to those of Germany. But we, too, have our young Hannibals, and we would single out three who could do yeoman service in different departments of the common cause—John Eadie of Glasgow, John Cairns of Berwick, and James Morison of Kilmarnock. This is no time for vain and contemptible janglings about “atonement *per se*,” “general and particular reference,” while the foundations are in jeopardy, when the posts of the door are moved, and the house is filled with smoke—and when, though the flesh hooks of our Hophnis and Phinehases be as busy as ever, many an Eli old, and many a Samuel young, are trembling for the ark of God.

Morison has published comparatively little; and what little there is, is of very unequal merit. On the one hand, we have his Essay on the Extent of the Atonement—able, eloquent, masterly; and, on the other, his little book on Prayer, a dilution of drivel and washiness, sprinkled with such flowers as, “Dear reader, lend me your knees.” He is preparing a book of higher pretensions and more elaborate structure, upon the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans—a work we think unnecessary. All that can be said in favour of the semi-Arminian notion of that chapter has been said already by the amiable and ingenious Erskine of Linlathen. Mr M.’s treatise, however, will contain much learning, much ingenuity of argument, much strength of statement and urgency of appeal; and, whether it break this crust, or “*crux criticorum*,” or not, will assuredly establish its author’s name as a writer on Scripture criticism.

We remember Mr Morison at college. A tall, somewhat eccentric youth, he was to be seen as regularly as Dr Ritchie or Professor Wilson, stalking along the bridges or Prince’s Street, with a white hat put awry on his head, and some half dozen volumes under his arm. He was then a hard student,

and a successful competitor for college prizes. Intense study threw him into ill health, which exerted very considerable and salutary influence on his mind. He was licensed to preach in 1839, we think, and settled soon after in Clerk's lane, Kilmar-nock, where he continued till 1841, when, in consequence of the atonement controversy (the most absurd, in our judgment, in the memory of man, which rose from nothing, proved nothing, and sunk as unaccountably as it had arisen), he left the Secession Church. He has since continued to preach in Kil-marnock, to a large and attached flock. He acts, too, as professor to the body which has arisen around him. We would fain hope that he and the other ministers of that body, many of whom, such as Mr Guthrie of Glasgow, and Mr Rutherford of Greenock, are most estimable persons, may soon see their way clear to rejoin the communion of the United Presbyterian Church, from which they differ rather in words than in reality.

MARCH 17, 1849.

REV. JAMES TAYLOR,

EAST REGENT STREET, GLASGOW.

THOUGH many of the lesser doings of man prove him to some extent the creature of circumstances, his mightier actions, which are more immediately connected with his mind, prove that he possesses an individuality which defies all these circumstances, and which, like the vessel propelled by steam, can move on against wind and tide, with but little impediment to its rate of progress. In proof of this we offer only one argument at present, and that to us appears satisfactory. In the largest ecclesiastical bodies there are men of narrow and sectarian mind, and in the smallest bodies there are men of catholic spirit and unbounded benevolence. Lest some may find difficulty in seeing how our facts prove the principle at issue, we may state that the natural tendency of large bodies is to give expansion to the powers of the mind and heart, while that of small bodies is to contract these powers and desires, till many have sat down wrapped in a mantle of selfishness, and concluded that in a degenerate age they only have been left to lift up a testimony for the truth. Now, it needs no proof that religious as well as other bodies owe much to circumstances for their formation. The majority become connected with such from hereditary prejudice, from personal or local attachments, or from some temporary visitation of feeling. Such a union, then, may be properly classed among man's lesser doings. It is formed in great measure through the pressure of circumstances over which he has but slight control. Men's mightiest doings have little or nothing to do with sectarian connexion. On the contrary, those deeds that most benefit man—that take the

widest sweep of benevolence, and have most of principle in them—owe nothing whatever to such mechanical association. The preacher of the Church of England never converted a human being from the error of his way by holding forth the beauties or utility of a state church. The Methodist never recalled a lost prodigal by descanting on the organization of the conference. The Dissenting preacher never turned one to righteousness by exhibiting the superiority of dissent over compulsoryism. The Independent never saved a soul by preaching independency. The Antipedobaptist never saved a soul by exciting its antipathies against those who deny certain rites to children; and the Baptist never converted a sinner, by pointing him to water where he may be baptized. It is man, not as the sectarian, but as man and as the Christian, that brings glory to God on earth, and good will to man. Still there seems to be occasionally a violation of harmony—an incongruity, when one begins to compare carefully persons and their principles—sectarian limitation with universal philanthropy. Somehow we look for expansion of minds in extensive bodies, and limitation of views among small bodies. We look for the member of a vastly ramified hierarchy to have a width and comprehensiveness of view which we dare not expect among the disciples of a narrow and exclusive faith. The member of the great ecclesiastical body has a wide field for the exercise of his faith and love, for he considers, or ought to consider, all his numerous associates as disciples, while the man of a limited sectional faith spreads his love and his hope over a very little flock. Unhappy is the man who looks not thus on his associates. Baxter's life was spent in regrets over the hopelessness of a church to which he was attached; and Hall and Foster were often grieved that those whom they were ecclesiastically under obligation to love were so unworthy of their regards. Among those in our day who disturb the harmony which we have supposed or established to ecclesiastically exist, is the subject of our sketch. He has a mind and heart which embrace Christendom, and yet he is formally connected with a comparatively small denomination. He is a conscientious, yet, we must still say, an accidental Baptist, but an intelligent and ardent Christian. He ecclesiastically shares

his thoughts and his affections with a small tribe, but, as a Christian, his heart beats in unison with the entire Israel of God. He may by the power of association say strong things in favour of the body to which he belongs, but from the deepest recesses of a feeling heart he wishes peace to the whole Church of God. He contends occasionally for the peculiarities of a sect, but he pleads always for the welfare of man and the glory of God. His church connexion is to him a sort of family matter, while, ecclesiastically, he disports in all the catholicity of evangelical Christendom. As a Baptist, he believes that adult baptism alone is scriptural—as a Christian, he believes that the Holy Ghost baptizes many who were never in the baptismal font. He urges his people to contribute to Baptist missions, and he calls on them to rejoice with him in the success of all evangelical missions. He associates with a small band, but considers himself a member of the household of faith—a member of the general assembly and church of the first born written in heaven. He and a number of the excellent men with whom he mingles, are nominal sectionalists and practical Christian philanthropists. They consider it desirable that one has attended to a rite on which they place such value as to make it warrant a formal severance from others; but they believe that immersed infidelity and practical inconsistency are more hateful than unbaptized atheism. The lives of such form a contrast with their profession, and yet both are good. They are, professionally, among the smallest religious bodies—they are, practically, not a whit behind the most zealous philanthropists of the time. Hear such a one as the subject of our sketch preach, and you cannot say what are the views he holds of organised Christianity. He preaches Christ Jesus the Lord, and himself as his servant. He can accompany the eunuch to the water without asserting that Philip and he were both immersed, and satisfy himself with saying what the inspired historian asserts, that the eunuch was baptised. He can read of households being baptised, without alleging there were no children in the household. He can even be present at the ceremony of infant baptism, without considering that the font has any connexion with the golden calves of Bethel and Dan. He holds firmly his own views of church order, and gives

others an equal liberty to hold theirs. With all deference to the many excellent men in that body, we cannot but consider him as before his views of church order. He believes in the Christianity of millions, while he only associates with hundreds. He admits others may get to the heavenly Canaan without being immersed in the Jordan, and yet he makes baptism the limits of his Christian fellowship. He, and all such, while we respect them, are unquestionably men to be wondered at— anomalies in the ecclesiastical world, whose views conquer their feelings, and who are afraid lest the liberty of their real views should degenerate into licentiousness, were they fully acted out.

Let none suppose that we mean, by the above remarks, to ascribe any liberalising virtue to establishments or other large ecclesiastical bodies. On the contrary, we have shown that these are, of themselves, the creatures of circumstance, and have no inherent power of action. Still it must be admitted, that while the tendency of large bodies is to increase, that of small ones is to divide and subdivide, till they lose influence and even identity. That which is of human constitution sometimes acts opposite to its seemingly natural design. That of God alone preserves its true character, and leads to uniform effects.

Last Sabbath evening, at half-past six o'clock, the subject of our sketch, in his church in East Regent street, commenced his usual evening service. After singing, during which the minister and congregation stood, he engaged in prayer, and then read a chapter. A few verses having been sung, he announced, as subject of lecture, Rev. 19th chapter. The discourse, of which we cannot even give an outline, was over at half-past eight, having occupied nearly an hour and a half.

During the introductory services the manner of the preacher is calm and easy. He reads the Psalms slowly and emphatically, and in prayer he leans forward on the Bible with his right hand stretched out before him. Shortly after he commenced his lecture he raised his voice to the highest pitch, and sustained it at that height till he finished. When the matter warranted it, that high pitch of voice made his delivery powerfully impressive. His peroration, for instance, was a torrent of eloquent and appropriate appeal. But in the didactic part of the discourse (as the first half evidently was) that high pitch

of voice was greatly out of place, and had on the hearer a painful effect. Very frequently the matter called for calm and dignified discussion. There are few preachers can boast of a voice of such variety and power. Its gentlest whispers are quite audible, while its thunders startle the most apathetic. In general his gestures are animated, and often graceful. The fault we have mentioned necessarily affects the entire manner, and its correction will render a manner already popular very attractive and winning. The lecture was on a part of divine revelation which can scarcely be interpreted till events shall evolve its meaning. The preachers of the 119th century will make more of it than those of the 19th. Still there was much to interest, and not a little to instruct in the lecture. The division of the chapter into three parts was neat and logical, though we were not sure that the completeness of the division was maintained in the illustrations. The preacher has a considerable amount of fancy, and, in general, his figures are well sustained, and his language neat and chaste. He has notes before him, which he occasionally uses, but he is a ready speaker, and can speak fluently and with propriety on any topic that presents itself in the course of discussion. On his peculiar views of the millennium we cannot enter at large. These views have at least one other able and eloquent expounder in our city, though to us they appear alike unscriptural and unphilosophical.

With the exception of these questionable views, the teachings of the subject of our sketch are healthful and impressive. Every one has his hobby, and some have half a dozen, and in this case the hobby is innocent enough. Our preacher seemed to feel that his millennium was more a subject for speculation than practical belief. "The saints," generally, have enough of this world before death, and have more pleasure in anticipating heaven than a return to this world, even though on some favoured spot of it Christ sojourned. His success as a preacher proves that his teachings possess substantial merit. By his energy and eloquence, the very beautiful and tasteful house where he now worships was reared, and on the occasion in question it was crowded to overflowing. He is one of the few who preach too much. He has often preached four, five,

and even six times a-day, which, of course, renders perfect preparation impossible. Did he preach less, there would be more matter condensed in his discourses. We are satisfied he could, by more lengthy preparation, condense the lecture of last Sabbath evening into half an hour. Its length was quite out of the question, both for minister and people. There is cruelty as well as bad policy in keeping a congregation cooped up in a badly-ventilated crowded church two hours and a-half, or even two hours. Would we could persuade preachers to confine themselves to the statutory one hour and a-half! The disorder that these long sermons occasion is incalculable.

Mr Taylor has for several years conducted a monthly periodical, called the *Evangelist*. It is alike creditable to his literary talent and his denominational prudence, and to his Christianity and benevolence. Indeed, it shows that he is as much calculated to be useful through the press as from the pulpit. It is a question, indeed, whether his mind would not be improved by being still more occupied with the close and consecutive thought requisite for successful authorship. He is active out of the pulpit in visiting his people, and his attentions towards the sick are unremitting. In private life he is affable, gentle, and communicable. He has found time to store his mind with general literature, and few ministers are better acquainted with passing events. Not only are his people attached to him, but he is loved by all with whom he comes in contact. He can converse with other Christians without hinting or implying that they are in a dangerous position because not of his denomination. Were all with whom he is ecclesiastically associated as catholic in their views, the denomination would be much stronger, numerically and influentially.

Mr Taylor is a native of Whitburn, Linlithgowshire, and was born in the memorable year of 1815. His first field of labour was Blackburn, near Edinburgh, where he was ordained in 1838. In 1840 he was settled with the church at Airdrie, which prospered greatly. In 1843, in consequence of change of views on the subject of baptism, he had a new church to collect and chapel to build in that town. The church of which he is at present pastor was formed in October, 1845. On the

1st January, 1846, he was ordained pastor. The church then numbered twenty-six members. After meeting for nearly two years in the New City Hall, the congregation removed to their present chapel, which, with the addition of new vestries, cost about £1800. The members are at present above 200. The audience during the day is about 500, and in the evening the place is crowded to overflowing. The chapel is one of the neatest in Glasgow, and reflects great credit on the taste that planned, and the enterprise that erected it.

FEB. 17, 1849.

REV. JOHN NOBLE, A.M.,

DUKE STREET, GLASGOW.

THERE is much meaning in the saying, "the modesty of true science." Newton's career was the best illustration ever furnished of this modesty. He considered himself but a child entering on the pursuit of science, and lisping its first principles. We know no good reason why the modesty of genius and of true ministerial talent should not be as much celebrated as that of science. There are, however, reasons which tend to prevent this application. In theology, mere dabblers have a better chance of *eclat* than dabblers in science. Those who would never shine in the annals of science, become small lights in the theological world; and it seems to be a fixed rule in that department, that those least cumbered by modesty succeed best in securing popular applause. Our clergy of great name are sometimes greatly inferior in all the substantial excellencies of preaching, to those less known. Every Presbytery and Synod have their acknowledged number of speaking and acting men; and others receive credit for being excellent listeners, and very good men in their own sphere. Those who know not these facts are occasionally astonished when they hear such preachers as the subject of our sketch. Of course he will seldom or never be heard but in his own pulpit, for the leading ones only patronise one another, and seldom think of inviting an unknown preacher to their pulpits. He thinks as well, and speaks as well as our public orators, and yet in church courts he never opens his mouth, because no one wishes him to do it, and because he is too modest to come forward of his own accord. The modesty of theology manifests itself by

silence, unless when called on imperatively to speak. Thanks, however, to many, their modesty does not prevent their good intentions, for they are equally ready to speak whether prepared or unprepared, and the worst prepared the longer will be the speech. Our church courts would be much more sensibly conducted, if means could be devised of keeping empty loquacity silent, and of drawing out real merit. As it is, a few well-known men carry on and settle all matters; and but for an occasional division, or the aid of an almanac, others, unless among their own people, would live and die unnumbered and unknown.

Shallow waters are noisy, whereas the broad deep river sweeps on noiselessly and majestically. It is somewhat amusing to see one who is not able to conduct the business of his congregation properly, kindly aiding to manage Presbytery and Synod business, while those who quietly manage their own people, have nothing to say in the management of others. Those who scatter congregations to the merest handfuls, volunteer their services and their zeal to church and state affairs, while those building up churches, in numbers, activity, and zeal, are sitting and silent members of church courts. All this proves that the time is not yet come when ministerial talent will be fully employed, and when ministerial prudence will be properly appreciated—when the man justly honoured by his people will be equally honoured by his clerical brethren—and when the man whose petulance and imprudence are patent to his people, will sit silent in the presence of superior worth and superior wisdom.

Last Sabbath afternoon the subject of our present sketch preached in Free St Stephen's Church of this city, by appointment of the Presbytery, in connection with the settlement of a minister in that church. After a few introductory remarks, he gave out, as his text, Joel ii. 12, &c., "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, rend your heart and not your garments," &c., to the end of the next verse.

The discourse was over at about twenty minutes past three, having occupied about three quarters of an hour. After prayer, baptism was administered, and after certain official duties the congregation was dismissed about four.

The discourse possessed substantial merit. It was complete as regards exordium, division, illustration, and peroration. The preacher very properly, in his introductory remarks, referred to the circumstances in which the words of his text were delivered, and then showing their bearing on all times and circumstances. Were the Old Testament always as judiciously treated, it would serve as important purposes in preaching the gospel as it does in the economy of redemption. He views it as exhibiting the character of man, and the unalterable perfections of God, and hence events become the emblems of principle, and illustrative of the divine perfections. The division included and exhausted the text. The duty and the encouragement are the leading themes of the passage, and both were admirably treated. The duty of repentance was lucidly stated. It was shown to be at once the duty of the sinner and the gift of God in full consistency and harmony. The "encouragements," too, were well arranged and intelligibly stated, and the varied illustrations were popular, pertinent, and impressive. We hesitate not to pronounce the discourse a model one, both doctrinally and practically considered. The manner of the preacher is animated and energetic. He reads his discourse from a carefully prepared manuscript, and though his eye is not closely confined to his notes, he evidently keeps by what he has previously prepared till he finishes the outline and its illustrations, and he then shuts the Bible and finishes with a stirring and inferential peroration. Our preacher is evidently a man of feeling. There is, doubtless, much of the tender and pathetic in his mental constitution, and his soft sweet voice well expresses his feelings. His delivery is slow, emphatic, and expressive. His voice generally varies with the subject, and his language is neat, and occasionally eloquent. He must be a useful as well as an attentive preacher if the specimens given are a fair average of his pulpit appearances. His prayer before sermon was short and comprehensive, and his reading of the Psalms was distinct and correct. In administering the rite of baptism he delivered a very excellent address. It was much more than the usual formal statement, it was a very lucid summary of the gospel, delivered with an energy becoming the subject, and which went far to redeem

the rite, which has sunk in many cases to dull formality. Dr Chalmers draws a distinction between the ministerial labourers who produce and the ministerial labourers who prune. What, he asks, are the ingredients of mightiest effect in the character and talents of a productive labourer? They are not his scholarship, and not his critical sagacity of discernment into the obscurities of Scripture, and not his searching or profound insight among the mysteries of the human constitution. With these he may be helped to estimate the Christianity that has been formed and to lop off its unseemly excrescences, but with these alone he will never positively rear on the foundation of nature the edifice itself. For the forthputting of this power we must look to men who bear on their own hearts the impress of Christianity, whether they are with or without a very high and artificial scholarship. We must look to those who have the Spirit themselves, and who have power in their intercessions with God. In the same discourse that prince of preachers denounced that pruning system which merely cuts everything out in doctrine and discipline, till a lifeless orthodoxy is obtained. He approves rather of Methodism, which has wrought its miracles, not of imaginary, but of substantial grace upon the people. The preaching of the subject of our sketch is calculated to be eminently productive. There is much of the stirring and exciting without wild extravagance or incoherent declamation. Enthusiasm, in the best sense of the term, characterises his pulpit appearances, and though he is not less learned than his brethren in the ministry he is probably less anxious to make any ostentatious display of his knowledge.

The subject of our sketch was born at Inverness, and received the degree of A.M. from the Senatus of King's College, Aberdeen. He succeeded the late Professor Ritchie of the London University, to the Rectorship of the Tain Academy, and was presented, in 1833, by the Hon. Mrs Hay M'Kenzie of Cromarty, to the Parish of Fodderty. He resigned his connection with the Established Church at the Disruption. He came, at the urgent call of the Gaelic congregation to Glasgow, and was influenced, by the concurrent opinion of the Presbyteries of Greenock and Glasgow to accept of the call to

the Gaelic congregation at Greenock, having been assured that his consent could tend to harmonise the congregation. He discovered that such would not be the case, and therefore could not consent to be a cause of a disruption, all the more, as in company with the late lamented Mr Stewart of Cromarty, he had violated the first valid and final interdict of the Court of Session, which caused the Disruption of the Established Church—Mr Stewart preaching at Huntly, and he at Rhynie in Strathbogie. He was also a member of the convocation, and signed all the resolutions.

FEB. 24, 1849.

[Since the above was written, Mr Noble has finished his earthly career. He died in April, 1849, and there have been deep lamentations over his early departure.]

REV. WILLIAM M'DOUGALL,

PAISLEY.

WHEN, about ten years ago, we made our first visit to Kilmarnock, among its sights our attention was drawn to an elegant church, which, on making inquiry, we were told was the Relief Kirk. The church was the most elegant in the place, with its spire and clock and bell, which indicated its being one of the temples of the Established Church rather than of a Dissenting body, then comparatively small and obscure as was the Relief Church of that time. Proceeding to work in a truly philosophical style we began to thus infer and reason:—There must be talent, and enterprise, and liberality, among a people who could construct such an edifice. The people whose taste and means have reared such a church must have selected a popular minister, and, accordingly, we resolved to hear him preach. The Sabbath was one in winter—one of those days in which nature aids devotion. Cloud and sunshine alternated, ever and anon the wind gave one of its hollow moans, as it assailed the leafless trees or discoursed its shrill music through every chink and aperture. And then the suspension of labour—the holiday dress—the Sabbath bell—and the clean faces recalled the sanctity and sacredness of that day. It was about six o'clock in the evening of that winter Sabbath that we made our way to the Relief Church, Kilmarnock. The stream of church-goers moving to that place, and the sound of the soft and solemn bell, directed our steps to our desired destination. On entering, though the hour of worship had not yet arrived, the spacious and elegant house was crowded, so that it was with difficulty a seat could be got. At

that time the Voluntary question was raging with great violence. Many ministers considered discretion the better part of valour, while a few took a prominent part, and contended for the forms of worship once delivered to the saints. Among the latter class was the subject of our sketch, who was then minister of that church, and who, on the evening in question, delivered a lecture on the subject. We do not distinctly remember the topic of lecture, but we still have vivid recollections of the appearance of the crowded and attentive congregation—the solemn and energetic manner of the lecturer, and the satisfaction we experienced in hearing the bulwarks of Voluntaryism so ably and eloquently defended before a congregation so apparently intelligent. At that time it required courage to lift up a testimony in behalf of assailed Voluntaryism. The compulsory system was strongly entrenched by all the resources of wealth, and respectability, and talent, and to assail the “church of our *fathers*,” as “*mother church*” was then called, placed one’s courage on the stretch. Our lecturer, on that evening, however, seemed strong in the faith, that his cause was good, and that despised and contemned Voluntaryism would one day bear the ascendancy. We returned from that place with our antipathy strengthened against compulsoryism in religious matters, and all our former prepossessions strengthened in favour of voluntary dissent. The bold stand our preacher made at that time gained him many friends, and not a few enemies. He prosecuted his work in that town with vigour and success, and was more than a match officially for the defenders of opposite systems. But for such ministers reformation would be impossible, and but for great strength of purpose, they could not be reformers. The great majority even of Christian men look at first on the doings of such with suspicion. Their zeal and courage are unmistakeable and undeniable, but their prudence, and even their piety, are apt to be called in question. The fact is, that all who venture to go before their associates, whether in religion or science, or philosophy, are set down as ignorant pretenders or mistaken or well meaning men. Time was when fires were prepared for reformers, and they got their sincerity tested by the thumbscrew, or the rack, or gibbet; and though these barbarous modes have

fallen into disuetude, a more refined and intense punishment is still the portion of the rude meddlers with established order—the assailants of crafts by which many have their living—the first asserters and workers out of great principles. Voluntaryism has had its martyrs as well as its advocates. Though the smell of no fires passed on them, they were subjected to pains and penalties the more intense, because known and felt only by themselves. They had to endure the frown of prudent associates—the suspicion of those left in the rear—the malice and revenge of those whose interests were assailed. The time may come when monuments will be reared to their memories; but before honour there is suffering as well as humility. The time for crowning the heroes of Voluntaryism has not yet come. The men whose envy, or jealousy, or revenge, they provoked, yet live; but another generation will appreciate their valour, and sing their posthumous fame. Knox lived not in marble till some time after he had finished his work, and all who have laboured in reforming the doctrines and the forms of professed Christianity will have their reward. Besides the honours which await them in the New Jerusalem, when they will associate with the martyrs of Jesus, their memory will be blessed on earth. Worth will be acknowledged when jealousy dies. The world is more just than many suppose, and the church will not be behind the world in cherishing the memory of its heroes and martyrs. We place the subject of our sketch among the boldest and most successful assertors of the honours of a great principle—a principle which he has lived to see in the ascendant, and which hastens to bless the church and the world. Years rolled on, but the impressions of that lecture which we have just alluded to still remained, and when, a few Sabbaths ago, we saw the preacher in John Street United Presbyterian Church the scenes and the circumstances ten years gone by were all conjured up. Time had begun to spread his snows on the head of the preacher. The impetuosity and popular power we had witnessed on the evening in question were less, but their place was well filled up with the development of the higher intellectual and moral powers. There were fewer brilliant passages, but the continuity of thought was as resistless, and the arrange-

ment was as lucid. His subject was the first four verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. i., which, after the usual introductory services, he gave out at 25 minutes to twelve o'clock. The preacher said that we find in these verses the different particulars in which the Jewish and Christian economy are contrasted. 1st, The author of both dispensations is God—God spoke to the fathers, and God spoke by his Son; 2d, We refer to the time and way of communication—He spoke at sundry times—or several portions—in sundry ways; 3d, The different persons *by* whom and *to* whom the communications were made. Each of these particulars were illustrated at considerable length, and with much clearness and force. The discourse was over at twenty minutes to one, and the congregation was dismissed at ten minutes to one.

The style of the discourse was neat, terse, and pregnant with thought. The introductory remarks were historical, and strikingly brought out the state of the Hebrews at the time the epistle was addressed to them. The language employed was graphically descriptive, and presented the audience with an interesting view of the Holy Land, with its sacred temple and its attached worshippers. The preacher having presented the Jews all turning their eyes to their temple, with their hearts beating in unison with their splendid ritual, strikingly introduced the author of the epistle, who, without salutation or preface thus speaks:—"God, who at sundry times," &c. The division adopted by the preacher was both logical and antithetical. The points of agreement and difference between the Jewish and Christian faith were admirably presented—the superiority of the Christian to the Mosaic institution triumphantly vindicated—the person and official glory of Christ proven to be infinitely superior to that of Moses—and the completeness of the entire economy of redemption—as regards type and antitype, representative and vicarious sacrifice—most satisfactorily demonstrated. What ought to be the aim of all discourses, the preceding was eminently practical. The faith of the Jew and the faith of the Christian were exhibited not as topics for speculation, but as the ground of personal faith, and the encouragements of practical hope. The preacher showed that the believer in Christianity follows no cunningly

devised fable, but rests on the wisdom and power of God—that a chain of evidence has been completed which only the most sottish ignorance, or the most daring infidelity, can doubt or deny. The discourse, as regards matter, had only one fault, and that was superabundance. There was a sufficiency in it to form a half-dozen discourses, and hence, despite the simple and clear style of the preacher, it required very close attention to follow his argumentation. Had the sermon been only the usual statutory length this might have been tolerable, but to keep attention on the rack for an hour and-a-half is certainly a severe test—so severe indeed, that we suspect comparatively few will submit to it. The discourse was one long argument, and, though conducted with much ability, was rather too much laboured for general acceptability. Besides the superabundance of matter, the manner of the preacher was less popular than on the occasion referred to in the commencement of this sketch. He seemed to quail under the weight of his own thoughts, and to be scarcely equal to the delivery of his laboured and elegant periods. His utterance was not equal to the superiority of his thought and eloquence of his diction. He frequently breaks up his well-finished sentences by a seeming difficulty in sustaining his voice and manner, and hence when the matter demands the full swelling voice, there are feebleness and tremulousness which impair the effect. The preacher had before him a carefully prepared manuscript, to which he generally adhered. His gestures, though not so animated at times as the matter warrants, are chaste and graceful. His appearance is grave, earnest, and solemn, and his voice is soft, full, and generally well modulated. He is allowed to be a preacher of peculiar excellence, and, by hard and persevering study, has brought a mind, possessed of superior natural powers, to a high state of perfection. As a theologian he stands high in the denomination with which he is connected, and enjoys the personal as well as official friendship of several of the most eminent ministers of the denomination. As an author he is comparatively little known. With the exception of some sermons in the Relief Preacher and Scottish Pulpit, we are not aware that he has appeared as an author.

He is the editor of the volume, lately published, of some of the discourses of the late lamented Rev. Robert Brodie, of whom he was a most intimate friend and a great admirer, and he has discharged his editorial duties with care, candour, and good taste. As a faithful and attractive friend he enjoys an enviable fame. He is open, generous, frank, and prudent. He possesses a large fund of anecdote, and humour is said to be a prominent feature in his character. In his playful moods he is as formidable an antagonist as in his graver assaults. He has read much, and is thoroughly versed in the various forms and the faith of Christianity. As a scholar, his attainments are considerable, though, in preaching the gospel, the results and not the details of his investigations are given. We doubt whether the public, or even his own denomination, fully understand his character. Those who have heard only his Voluntary lectures fancy him a Boanerges, or a Luther; whereas, in fact, there is little of either in his constitution. Undoubtedly he possesses firmness, boldness, and independence; but meekness, mildness, benevolence, and kindness, predominate in his character, and he is more in his element as a preacher of peace and good will, than as the advocate of any system. His delight is to preach Christ Jesus the Lord, though he is neither ashamed nor afraid to defend the machinery of a voluntary Christianity, when circumstances call for such defence. When duty calls, all his natural sensitiveness disappears, and he comes forward, bold as a lion, to defend what he conceives to be the truth of God. In this calculating and compromising age some have mistaken his character and motives, though we have no doubt that he is well entitled to Pope's highest style of man. Long may the influential church, of which he is a minister, enjoy his valuable and efficient services.

Mr M'Dougall is a native of Inverary, which his parents left when he was very young. He received his education in the schools and University of Glasgow. There being no professor of theology to the Synod of Relief, he studied divinity under the late Rev. Dr Stevenson Macgill. Having received license from the Relief Presbytery of Glasgow in the end of

the year 1822, he was ordained, in 1823, over the Relief Congregation, Campbelton. In 1827 he received a call to Kilmarnock. During his incumbency, the former place of worship, which contained about 1000 sittings, having become too small for his increasing congregation, the present large and elegant church was built for him, which was soon filled to overflowing. In 1843, on the death of the Rev. Dr Thomson, he was translated to his present charge in Thread Street, Paisley. Of his success there we cannot speak, but we have no doubt the St Mirrenites appreciate his preaching as well as the people he left. He is now minister of one of the largest and wealthiest congregations in Paisley.

MARCH 8, 1849.

REV. MATTHEW GARDINER, D.D.,

BOTHWELL.

THOUGH every Christian delights to anticipate the time when men will beat their spears into ploughshares, and their swords into pruning-hooks, and when they shall learn war no more, it cannot be denied that occasionally the sword has been employed with success in the service of Christianity. We must state, however, that the success has been owing to a false position taken by the temporal rulers of the people. Had these never mixed the sacred with the secular, and endeavoured to coerce the conscience, there never could have arisen such circumstances as would have justified the disciples of Christianity in marching to defend their principles in the battle field. It cannot be denied that all the persecutions of the last fifteen centuries originated in Cæsar interfering with the things that were God's, and attempting to mould the religious opinions of men into unison with political and ecclesiastical intrigue. The most strenuous advocates for peace can scarcely blame the Covenanters for arming and meeting the emissaries of usurpers over the conscience on their own ground. The heart of every true Presbyterian swells with gratitude as he looks back to the transactions of Bothwell Bridge, when the stern sons of the covenant met a bloody Dalziel and a Claverhouse, and repelled the infliction of "black prelacy" with their broad swords. The seeming defeat of the Covenanters on that occasion was a virtual victory, and to it and similar scenes Scotland owes the purity and simplicity of her Presbyterian worship. It is not a little remarkable, that Bothwell Bridge and its neighbourhood, in which so many fell, are coupled in the

intelligent mind with the most sacred associations. The intrepidity, independence, zeal, courage, and piety of the Covenanters, and the sacredness of the cause in which they bled, strips the locality of all the horrors of a battle field, and renders the place holy ground. There lives not an intelligent man but feels a solemnity come over his spirit as he nears the spot where the Covenanters triumphed in death, and where they spilled their blood in testimony of the sacredness in which they held their principles. The dread transactions of that locality compelled the persecutors to pause, and taught them that the true protestors and Presbyterians of Scotland valued principle much higher than even their life; and who will dare to blame those holy men for interposing their lives between Scotland and "black prelacy"? But for the stand those made, what were Scotland at this moment? To what is it owing that Scottish Presbytery and Scottish piety are celebrated throughout the world? Are not these things owing to the character and heroic deeds of our Covenanting forefathers?—to those men that wandered in dens and caves of the earth—being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy? And why is it at this moment that Scotland is less the arena of political priestcraft than any other country? Is it not because of those men who refused to call any man on earth father, and who, rather than injure their conscience, submitted joyfully to the spoiling of their goods, and braved even death itself in its most revolting forms? Every great principle has had its martyrs as well as its assertors, and if Scottish Presbytery is to be estimated according to the number of its martyrs, its claims rank higher than any other system. Though we place not the one sacrifice without the gates of Jerusalem in comparison with any other, there may be no impiety in asserting that while that one sacrifice will yet be the means of effecting the Christianising of the whole world, a fresh lustre has been thrown around that great moral manifestation by the doings and the sufferings of those who confessed they owed their all to that sacrifice. Who will deny that from Bothwell Bridge an influence potent and healthful has for centuries proceeded, and that time and change only add to that influence? The transactions at that bridge, how-

ever vividly realised and earnestly believed, cannot of themselves save a soul, but they have thrown an imperishable grandeur around Scottish Presbytery, and exerted a benign influence in behalf of Christianity to the very ends of the earth. The contagion of those events has extended to every Presbyterian, and added decision to his character and vigour to his piety. We could not help supposing that the man who, for nearly half a century, has dwelt and ministered, as it were, under the shadow of that bridge, must be eminent for his piety and energy; but it was not till last Sabbath that we had an opportunity of testing our long-cherished theory, and we were extremely gratified to find that, as far as we could judge, our theory was perfectly correct. Having seated ourselves in Bothwell Church on that occasion, we were impatient to satisfy our eyes and ears as to whether the favourable reports we had heard of the clergyman, who had ministered for forty-six years in that parish, were in accordance with fact. Shortly after the usual hour of public worship (twelve noon), one ascended the pulpit stairs, whose mean and aspect seemed to correspond with the idea we had formed. A venerable old man, beginning to bow beneath a load of years, whose locks were silvery white, whose countenance was the image of tranquillity, temperance, firmness, and piety, and whose steps retained all the elasticity of youth, was about to bless the audience. When he stood up to commence the service, there was devotion and music in the tones of his voice and heaven in his placid countenance. Who could be otherwise than charmed, as in his own earnest, winning way, and in a voice sweet as the syrens, he on that morning, in the presence of a still congregation, read as follows:—

“In beauty of His holiness,—O do the Lord adore!

Likewise let all the earth throughout—Tremble his face before.”

We cannot say that in singing these lines the harmony was perfect, but there were earnestness and devotion in many a countenance; and how could it have been otherwise? Singing being over, the venerable occupant of the pulpit rose and offered a prayer, which for simplicity, appropriateness, and devotion, and real practical matter, we certainly never heard excelled. He then read, and very neatly expounded, the 11th

chapter of the Acts. After praise, he gave out as his text, 2d Corinthians vi. 2. The words of the text were, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation." He commenced by saying that this text contains a truth of the greatest importance, which is ushered in with the word "behold" inviting attention to it. Let us proceed to inquire what is to be understood by the words "the accepted time" and the "day of salvation," and the improvement we are to make of it. The accepted time and the day of salvation are evidently of synonymous import, and refer to the same period, namely; to the space God waits to be gracious, and during which we may, by divine grace, secure to ourselves an interest in that salvation which is in Christ with eternal glory. My friends, we all stand in need of salvation. We have in us by nature a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Our sins have been countless as the hairs on our head, and as the sands on the sea shore, and God hath said the soul that sinneth it shall die. Such was the sentence to which we all had become obnoxious. Thoughtless and presumptuous men may indeed flatter themselves that the Father of mercies will not be strict to mark their iniquities nor severe to punish them; but the Scriptures expressly declare that God will by no means clear the guilty,—that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish shall be the portion of every soul of man that doeth evil. But in the council of peace the eternal Father said, Deliver from going down to the pit for I have found a ransom; and in the fulness of time He sent forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and Jesus Christ by his humiliation, his sufferings, and obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, having expiated the guilt of His people, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness and salvation, in Christ. Jehovah now proclaims himself ready to receive and ready to forgive every returning sinner. So long as the offers of mercy and pardon are made, so long is there a way of return to God. Space is granted during which we may be saved. And this is the accepted time—this the day of salvation. He then ex-

patiated on the inconceivable blessedness which shall be the portion of the man who shall be found on the day of judgment to have improved this precious season, and closed with the offers of the gospel. He then went on to say—Well, then, is the present called the accepted time and the day of salvation; and need I tell you that the salvation of the soul is the first and greatest work in which we can engage? If we fail in this all our other work will be lost, for what will it profit a man should he gain the whole world if he lose his soul? Are you then seeking this salvation with all your heart? Have you fled to Christ as the only hope set before you in the gospel? Do you live by the faith of the Son of God? Is his word your rule, and his glory your aim?—his love your motive, sweetly constraining you to obey his commands? Put these questions to yourselves individually, as the present is the only time for acceptance and reconciliation—the preparation time for the inheritance of the saints in light. One sin unrepented of and unforgiven will be your ruin; and who can understand his errors? Have you then with an humble and contrite heart, bewailed your sins before God? Have you put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do you walk in newness of life? You have wasted much precious time, while Sabbath after Sabbath God has called you to repentance and faith. He has allured and alarmed you, but yet some of you are without Christ, and, consequently, without hope. How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? Will you not feel your need of salvation before the day of salvation is over, and your state for ever fixed? Will you not reflect on the state of your souls before they are lost for ever? Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Awake and seek the things that belong to your peace, lest they be suddenly and for ever hid from your eyes. Perhaps some are saying they mean to be religious at a future period. The young look forward to being settled in life; the middle-aged to the time when they shall be less encumbered with the cares of this life; and the aged to a sick or dying bed. Then they hope to seek and find acceptance with God. I would ask you, Have you made a covenant with death and an agreement with the grave, so that you are sure you will live till

your "convenient season" arrives? What multitudes who recently heard the offers of mercy have suddenly been called away! Is the time of sickness and bodily distress and dissolution, the time to seek God? Soundness of mind is as necessary as health of body in order to attend to the concerns of the soul, and are you sure that frenzied fever may not seize you at the time you set to seek God? The Son of man may come at an hour you think not. Suddenly you may be sent to the bar of judgment, even before you could cry for mercy. On all these grounds, as well as many others, may not the present be called the accepted time and the day of salvation. To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Let this day be the beginning of days to your souls. Welcome the Saviour to your hearts, and may he enter in and dwell there, and dwell with you for ever. The sermon, which occupied about three quarters of an hour, was over at a quarter to two; and, after the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at two o'clock, having been assembled two hours.

We have given a brief outline of the preceding discourse, to prepare our readers for the opinion we are now about to express of this preacher. We feel warranted to pronounce it a sermon of no ordinary merits. Without any statement of dogmatic theology, the doctrinal views of the preacher were brought out with admirable clearness. The text allowed an epitome of the gospel, and this the preacher stated in a luminous and simple manner. But excellent and unexceptionable as is the matter, it loses incalculably by the absence of the sweet persuasive sounds of the preacher's voice. Earnestness is probably the most prominent characteristic of his preaching. He is no cold theorist—no calculating doctrinalist—but an earnest, energetic, experimental preacher. He speaks not before his people, but to them; and without any fear of offending ears polite, he tells the ungodly part of his hearers of that state which awaits them if they die unpardoned. We have formerly stated that the good which a preacher accomplishes owes nothing to his sectarian connexion. No one ever converted a sinner from the error of his way by holding forth the peculiarities of sect; but every one succeeds just as he preaches unsectarian Christianity in all its scriptural catholicity. If this theory is correct, our

preacher holds a high place among the successful preachers of the time. His discourses—judging from the above—are alike free of sectional and dogmatical peculiarity. We should do our preacher a manifest injustice did we not emphatically state, that he in the highest and best sense of the term preaches Christ Jesus the Lord. His prayers and his discourses are alike redolent with the doctrines of the cross. It is moreover to be observed, that his discourses and prayers are not a mere compilation of sound words collected from confessions and catechisms—he keeps Christ crucified before his hearers, and connects every doctrine and duty with the cross. We never heard prayers or a sermon which more prominently brought out justification by faith in the vicarious sufferings of Christ, and sanctification by the Spirit of God. His preaching is the preaching of sound principles more than of sound words. We have often thought that many who wish to be accounted orthodox preachers, would be more honest and more consistent to discard Christ altogether from their services. He is named so that the erasure of his name would scarcely affect their sermons. He may be introduced to round a period, or give a doctrine the semblance of Christianity, but the peculiar doctrines of the cross are not the substance of their discourses. They speak of Christ much after the fashion they speak of Peter, or John, or Paul, or even of some classical hero. They are characters in the piece, but not the chief or most prominent ones. To all mere formal orthodox preachers of every name, we say, go and learn of the subject of our sketch. Though no man that feels not an interest in the blessings of the gospel can preach as he does, others may learn how far they come short of preaching the truth as it is in Jesus. Besides the preaching being of the right sort, his manner greatly recommends his doctrine. His manner is solemn, earnest, and impressive. His voice is full, sweet, and musical, and excellently under control; and, though advanced in years, he makes himself not only intelligible in every part of the large church, but effective. Its winning sounds and its alarming notes are alike audible and alike persuasive.

The appearance of the subject of our sketch corroborates all that has been said of the healthiness of the locality where he

has laboured so long. Though he is in the forty-seventh year of his ministry, he retains almost his youthful vigour. His mind has evidently lost none of its powers, and his delivery is as energetic as in earlier years. Though in his fine church here and there one is to be found covered with the snows of age, he has seen almost an entire generation pass away. He now ministers to the grandchildren of those who enjoyed the early part of his ministrations. The fathers, the children, and the children's children, have received the benefit of his instructions; and if they appreciate them not, their final account will not be with joy. A locality which has for half a century been favoured with so faithful a ministry, ought to be eminent for its morality and religion.

Dr Gardiner is a native of Glasgow, and was educated at the Grammar School, and afterwards at the University of that city. Having finished his curriculum, he obtained license from the Glasgow Presbytery about 1799. Having afterwards resided in the neighbourhood of Hamilton, he preached occasionally for the minister of that parish. It says much for his popularity in early years, that on entering the ministry he had no prospects of patronage from any quarter whatever, but depended entirely for advancement on his own resources. On one occasion while preaching, as stated above, for one of the Hamilton ministers, Lord Archibald Hamilton and two of his sisters were amongst his auditors. They were so satisfied with Mr Gardiner's services, that Lady Ann Hamilton, unsolicited on Mr Gardiner's part, procured for him the first vacant parish in her father's gift, which fortunately happened to be Bothwell. He was here ordained in April, 1802, where he has since laboured successfully, to a very attached and devoted people.* Dr Gardiner was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1837. For many years the Doctor kept up a regular system of catechising his parish, and still continues his visitations. He holds the degrees of A.M. and D.D. from Glasgow University.

MARCH 10, 1849.

* As a proof of which we may mention, that the parishioners, and a few friends of the Presbytery, presented him last year with his portrait, painted by John Graham Gilbert, Esq. of Yorkhill.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSTON, M.A.,

LIMEKILNS, DUNFERMLINE.

THE harmony of the universe has been successfully urged as a proof that there is but one all-creating—all-preserving God. Probably the *diversity* of the universe might bear with equal effect in proof of that great truth. It is that diversity which renders the harmony so remarkable. The maintenance of harmony among objects exactly similar would be a comparatively easy task, but when resemblance is the exception, and difference the rule, the combining of all into one complete, compact, and imposing whole, can be the act only of one comprehensive and perfect mind. In the preservation of this harmony there are the nicest adjustments—the most complex relationships—the most complete counterparts, and the most striking analogies everywhere observable. The material creation besides being a platform where the spiritual and moral are manifested, is a vast system of emblem. It is more than the objective—it is the counterpart of the subjective in the minds of the intelligencies for which it has been fitted up for a school and a home. The fat valley presents to the eye those tranquil spirits whose life is quiescence, and whose manifestations never astonished and seldom better the world. What is thunder but the shadow of those tumultuous spirits whose doings have shaken and alarmed the nations; and what is the lightning but the indication of that subtle and resistless intellect whose might and mastery have always been felt and acknowledged. According to principles implied in these remarks, the human mind will appear in forms as diversified as the manifestations of nature. One man's meat is another man's poison.

What delights one distresses another. When the thunder roars one man walks abroad into the field to enjoy its music, while another shuts himself up in closest retirement, and would exclude, if possible, its sound. One trembles lest the lightning in its sweep should make him the object of its power, while another person irreverently plays with its wings, and attempts to trace its way. On some men all the loveliness of the varied landscape is utterly thrown away, while in others it excites the most delightful and ecstatic emotions. But for this diversity the harmony of the universe, or "balance of power," could not be maintained. What were the consequence, if taste and talent were alike. The whole world would be after one object, to the neglect of every other. The pulpit and pew afford an excellent illustration of variety. If taste and talent were not peculiar, the pulpit would present a very tame and anomalous aspect. Were pulpit talent different, and pew taste the same, the entire population of a city would be after the same preacher. Were pulpit talent the same, and pew tastes different, the great majority of hearers would find nothing to please or profit; but pulpit talent and pulpit tastes being both different, harmony is secured, and every one can be satisfied without envying any other. The name of the subject of our sketch will in many minds suggest such traces of thought as has been pursued in the foregoing remarks. There is in his preaching a strong individuality—an unmistakable indication of certain mental attributes, which can be fully appreciated, only by a certain class of mind. Those that prefer sound to sense; and even those that prefer sense, accompanied with a considerable amount of sound, will not greatly profit by his ministrations. Those, on the other hand, who gratefully accept the greatest amount of sense presented to them, in the most unostentatious and most unpretending manner, may uniformly count on a treat, when favoured with his public instructions. The class who can trace the lightning in its resistless and noiseless progress—that can listen with rapture to the music of the spheres—that can hear an effective voice in the calm sunshine, and words unutterable in the still midnight, will feel a joy unspeakable, as they drink from his

lips, the essence of a strong intellectualism, and a healthful spirituality.

Last Sabbath, he made his appearance in Greyfriars' Church, Glasgow, than which few congregations can enjoy his ministrations with a higher relish. Like all preachers of the higher class, his introductory services are brief and appropriate. His prayer before sermon, was a flow of devout and clear thought. Many were rather struck with an earnest supplication in it, to the effect that the contemnors of our Sabbaths might be disappointed in their pursuits, and led to acknowledge the Lord of the Sabbath. At 25 minutes to 12, he gave out as his text, two words in the first verse of the first chapter of 2d Peter—"Precious faith." He commenced his discourse by saying that the Apostle Peter, in his two epistles, uses the word *precious* very frequently, and always in reference to subjects intimately connected. "To you that believe he (Christ) is *precious*, ye have been redeemed with the *precious* blood of Christ. Exceeding great and *precious promises* are given us." In the text, we read of *precious* faith, and elsewhere we find the trial of faith called *precious*. In reference to faith, it is called *precious*; and that it is so, we will see by considering, 1st, its nature; and 2d, its preciousness or value. 1st, or to the nature of faith. Faith is the belief of the testimony God has given regarding his Son. This testimony is briefly embodied in different passages, as, for instance, This is the record God has given of his Son, eternal life, &c. It is a faithful saying, &c. Being in the form of God, he took on him the form of a servant, &c. The testimony includes his humiliation, death, resurrection, and reign. We must believe that he now lives for us, as well as that he once died for us; and that he now dispenses pardon and peace, to all who believe on his name. As regards the mental act of faith, it is the same in all cases. As we believe other matters, so we believe in Christ. Faith is an act we perform every day. But to avoid all mistake on a matter so important, we must make sure that what we do believe is God's testimony. Many impose on themselves by using general terms. One on whom the gospel makes no impression, says he believes it; and another, whose life is

moulded according to its precepts and spirit, also says he believes; but these two agree, probably only, in the terms they employ. The former may exclude the atonement of Christ, and, of consequence, all its effects; while the other holds it. The one may believe none of the peculiar doctrines of the Cross, while, in the case of the other, they are all his salvation and desire. But beware, further, of mistaking assent for faith. The young man that came to Christ sincerely, but mistakenly, believed that he had kept all the commands; and, in like manner, many think they believe all the truths of the gospel, while their faith may be merely educational or conventional. He illustrated this particular by an allusion to an emigrant vessel. Those who do not think of sailing with it hear of it as a matter of indifference, while the one who is to go on board examines well its tonnage, sea worthiness, storage, commander, &c. According to this view, faith is capable of degrees, and will be in proportion to the number and character of the subjects believed. Here he employed the simile of a landscape that may be partly seen from different points of view, but only fully from one. All who believe in the fundamental facts of Christianity are Christians, and yet there may be great diversity in their mental state. But faith may be increased not only as regards the number of facts believed, but the same fact may be presented to the mind in different degrees of vividness. All the truths of salvation centre in the person and work of the Divine Redeemer. He is the living Saviour, and our faith will be strong or weak as we so realise the truth. John was called to believe when a vision of the Saviour well nigh overwhelmed him, that Jesus was the living one who was dead—that he was alive—and that he would live for evermore. All these facts in their relation to each other, and to his state, inspired him with confidence. He who frequently goes and obtains advice from a friend, trusts him much more than he who merely hears of his fame. But, 2dly, we consider the value or preciousness of faith. He illustrated this by several particulars. 1st, Faith is precious, because it unites us with Christ. 2d, Faith is precious, because it purifies the heart. 3d, Faith is precious, because it supports under the trials of life. 4th, Faith is precious, because it is the animating principle of a holy life. He

then concluded by saying that if faith did all these things, is it not precious? The discourse was over at half-past twelve, having occupied 55 minutes. After the concluding services the large congregation was dismissed at 23 minutes to one.

The subject of discourse which, though of the last moment, would appear in most hands dry and uninviting. The Christian world in Scotland heard so much of the nature of faith during recent controversies, that the subject, being associated so much with profitless controversy, excites none of the pleasantest feelings. In the hands of our preacher, it ceased, however, to be something to fight about, and became an intensely interesting personal matter. Instead of treating his audience to the dogmas of the schools about the four kinds, or four hundred kinds, of faith, he at once took what some may reckon the heretical ground of Pollok—

“In object, not in kind, the difference lay.”

But while he thus freed his subject from the mazes of mysticism he took equal care to guard it from the latitudinarianism, or, rather, the nothingism, of those who confound assent with faith, and this too, he did, by philosophically pointing out that the distinction between assent and faith in the business of life is as broad and marked as in the matters of religion. He insisted on making sure of the facts or testimony, and then of making sure that it was an active faith, and not an uninquiring assent that we yielded. The constitution of the mind of our preacher evidently qualifies him for discussing such a subject. His features are the emblem of a keen and metaphysical intellect. He may not see so far, mentally, as some others, but his intellectual eye is as a flame. At a glance he can penetrate the clouds and darkness which good and mistaken men have carefully folded round a subject, and he not only sees it, but he makes others see it. He throws his lucid thoughts into extremely neat and felicitous language. Such is his command of language, that without notes his discourse throughout was one torrent of rapid speaking. Stumble he occasionally does—but that is not for want of words, but through a contest of words—this attempting to supersede that, or both coming together. His voice, too, as well as his features and mind, is sharp and clear, and excellently under command. He varies

it with his subject. Though it seems designed for exposition, or giving expression to thought, it can also tremble with feeling. It can beseech as well as persuade, and appeal to the conscience as well as irradiate the understanding.

The manner of the preacher is remarkable for its ease. He wishes to appear as he really is, and to make no impression but what he is able to sustain. He has the ease of a real character, and is nothing whatever of an actor. He assumes no airs in his dress or bearing. He allows the people to believe in the excellence of his phrenological development without favouring them with ocular demonstration—his brow being concealed with the hair that straggles over it. His manner is characterised by earnestness as well as ease. He appears like one anxious to tell others of something he is persuaded will be to them of immense benefit. This earnestness is apparent in his voice and gestures, both of which appropriately and tastefully express it. His language, as we have said, is neat, sententious, and singularly clear. His sermon is redolent with the thoughts of the philosopher and metaphysician, clothed in the language of a tasteful orator. The large congregation to whom he ministered on the occasion referred to, appreciate his services.

Mr Johnston was educated in Glasgow, and is a graduate of our University. He was settled at Limekilns shortly after he had finished his studies, and despite numerous attempts to remove him, he has remained since with that congregation. He has been induced to preach occasionally to various congregations in our city, one of which, at least, presented him with a call. He is attached to his own people, which, coupled with his shrinking sensitiveness, will render it no easy matter to remove him to any other congregation. He was ordained in 1823, and is in the 26th year of his ministry, and yet in appearance he is not more than forty years of age.

MARCH 24, 1849.

[About two weeks after the appearance of this sketch, the University of Glasgow conferred on him the degree of D.D.]

REV. JOHN BUCHANAN, A.M.,

FREE CHURCH, BOTHWELL.

IN certain matters there is still much in a name. In religious questions names have long had an omnipotent power among the multitude, but it is to be particularly observed that these names have chiefly to do with the secularities of religion. The varied sanctuaries with which our land is full are known by certain ecclesiastical watchwords for the special use of friends and foes. In not a few instances the friends have got one name and the opponents another. The influence of the names extends only to the machinery of the different bodies. As far as regards the spiritual and religious they have no might whatever. The same thing is taught in most of the churches, whether nominally bond or free. Unless in cases where imprudent officials conduct the services, no one could detect, by any possibility, from the religious service, what sect any particular congregation forms a part. Even in localities where bigotry and narrow-mindedness exert their most potent influence, the services of the sanctuary are unsectarian and catholic. A name is no help to devotion, though it sometimes greatly furthers the secularity of a sect; and it is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when party names shall be known no more, and when the disciples will be known, as at Antioch, by the significant appellation of Christian. Meanwhile, party names would do well to be kept in abeyance. Those who make least of them generally make most of religion; while, on the other hand, those who know religion only in name, are most zealous in the advocacy of ecclesiastical names—as were the Pharisees in tithing mint and anise,

while weightier matters were overlooked. Indeed, they may say, if their dear name was removed, What have I more? Bothwell, long undisturbed by sectarian warfare, is now divided in ecclesiastics. A considerable number of the inhabitants at the memorable disruption of 1843, deserted what is called "the Church of our fathers," and formed themselves into a Free Church congregation. They had no fault to find with the ministrations to which they had been accustomed, but they took their stand on principle, and forsook the place where they had been baptised and had long worshipped. And where is the Protestant who would forbid liberty of conscience? They thought that adherence to the Established Church was incompatible with the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and they sundered the dearest ties, and separated themselves from chief friends. It is not necessary that the ground one takes in such matters is invulnerable—it is enough that it appears to them better than the system they leave. There can be no demonstration in matters about which good and honest men are divided. A *prima facie* case is sufficient, and no one has a right to forbid another to occupy at once what he thinks the preferable position. At Bothwell there are two denominations, but, fortunately, there is but one gospel, and in the business of eternity the machinery of religion will eventually appear a small matter. In the "Fourth Pilgrim" there is a representation of a number of pilgrims passing through the Jordan, and before they enter a number are seen buckling on their broad buttons and hats—others are occupied with securing their testimony, &c., but no sooner do they enter the water than their respective bundles are swept off their backs, and are seen gathered in heaps at the edge of the water on the same side as the pilgrims entered, while the parties pass along to the other side, and have no badge of sectarianism remaining. In the General Assembly on high, much that was dear on earth will not be found—having been left in the waters of the Jordan of death; or, adopting a classical allusion, having been swept away in Lethe, and lost in the waters of oblivion. Last Sabbath we visited the Free Church at Bothwell, and with the exception of a few intimations, which were read at the close of the service, we heard nothing of

bond or free churches, any more than we heard of sectarianism on a previous Sabbath from the occupant of the other church. The services, as then, commenced at 12 o'clock, and the preliminaries consisted of twice singing, prayer, and reading a chapter without exposition. The subject of our sketch, at 20 minutes to one, gave out for his text, 2 Pet. i. 17, "We have made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He commenced by remarking that the apostle when he uttered these words was near his end. He spoke with a deep conviction of the truth of the gospel message. He had not "followed cunningly devised fables," nor "vain traditions received from the fathers." He made known matters of fact and of experience. There are three systems of faith. One class believes Christianity to be a fable; a second class considers it a mere system of opinions; and a third receives it as a system of facts. The apostle strikes at the root of the first two systems of faith. He declares what he saw, and knew, and felt. He appeals to his own experience. If Christianity were a matter of opinion, it were of comparatively little consequence whether we receive or reject it. The wicked notion is now too common, that it matters little what a man believes, provided he is sincere. If Christianity were mere matter of opinion, this might be true, but facts are unchangeable, and our faith cannot alter them. In our text the gospel is stated in short compass. It is expressed and implied in the two facts—the "power" and "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The "power" refers not to Christ's eternal power as the mighty God, but to his delegated and official power, which he exerts in saving men—the power of the Holy Ghost exerted among the families of men. The same as Christ speaks of in John 17th, "Power over all flesh," that he may give eternal life to those given him. This is "the power" which Peter preached. It is the power which Christ is now putting forth as a priest and a king upon his throne in establishing his everlasting kingdom. His "coming" in the text refers to his coming in the day of judgment to perfect his kingdom. (See 1 Pet. i. 7, 13, and 2 Pet. ii. 4, 12.) It is to be observed that Peter in his summary of the gospel in the text, says nothing of the atonement. It is seldom mentioned in either of his two epistles.

He speaks of the fact that Christ had come and suffered for sin, as a fact lying at the foundation of the whole Christian system; but it is never introduced otherwise than as connected with and securing the conversion and sanctification of God's elect. (1 Pet. i. 2.) He is more occupied with its design and effects on those whom he addresses than with the fact itself. Here he quoted a number of passages in proof of this statement. Let us now see how this design is accomplished. We speak not of the purchase, but of the application of redemption to the human soul—the great fact of the gospel system set before us in the text. Is it then a fact that the spirit of God is at work in this world—that Christ is thereby making good his claims as King in Zion? Peter on this point appeals to the experience of those to whom he writes, specifying three distinct steps in the work of the spirit in applying redemption to the soul. (1.) "He hath begotten us again." (2.) "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And (3), "Ye are receiving the ... salvation of your souls." (See 1 Pet. i. 5, 9.) In other words we have—1st, The new birth; 2d, Preservation in faith; 3d, Growth in grace—three facts in the experience of believers, spoken of, and appealed to as facts by the apostle. The question now is, how ought we to act in reference to this threefold work of the Holy Ghost? A threefold privilege implies threefold obligation. The Apostle, therefore, follows up the enumeration of these privileges, with urging these three corresponding duties, 1st, Gird up the loins of your mind, and hope to the end. 2d, Corresponding to the privilege of preservation by the Spirit, is the duty of cherishing the Spirit. Therefore, See that ye love one another, with a pure heart fervently. 3d, The third privilege brings with it a third duty. 1 Peter, ii. 2, Desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby. But, how can we fulfil this threefold obligation? The way is simple, v. 19. It resolves itself into the good old rule of "Search the Scriptures." Particularly, 1st, That hope may be conceived and sustained, there must be a receiving of the word of promise by faith. Hope is the fruit of faith. Therefore, if you would live in the hope enjoined, lay hold upon the promises. 2d, That you may keep your position and attainments, you must keep the word always

in remembrance. If you would retain the grace of God, you must retain the word of God. And 3d, that you may grow in grace, you must grow in acquaintance with the scriptures, that make wise unto salvation. A number of intimations and the concluding services occupied another half hour, and the congregation was dismissed at 25 minutes past two, having been nearly two and a half hours assembled.

The introductory services gave a stranger a rather incorrect idea of the preacher's abilities. It was not till he had proceeded considerably with his discourse that his excellence as an effective public speaker appeared. The discourse displayed comprehensiveness and strength of mind. The preacher, from the text, educed a long and able argumentative train of thought. The "power" of our Lord Jesus Christ he made a summary of the gospel by direct statement and obvious reference. According to the view he took of the text, the apostles frequently assumed the fact and objective design of Christ's death, and dwelt merely on its subjective effects on the mind, and hence the power of Christ he understood to be that official power with which he was invested on account of his death—his power over all flesh that he might give eternal life to his people. This subject he illustrated with much clearness and cogency. He displayed an intimate knowledge of the epistles of Peter, and also a great amount of analogical illustrative ability. He spoke and reasoned well, and introduced tangible figures, which, if not always unobjectionable as regards taste, were intelligible and forcible. As a whole, the sermon was able and eloquent, and calculated to be very useful. The preacher seizes his subject strongly, and enters into it with spirit. He has all the fury of a Candlish, and a good deal of his manner, as regards voice, &c. Some may have inferred from the discourse that the preacher made too little of the fact and design of the atonement, but this is a mistake. The preacher took up one idea—the subjective aspects of the atonement—and to that he adhered; but it is specially to be observed that all these subjective aspects were founded on, and inseparable from, the nature of the atonement. The discourse, moreover, formed a contrast with those sermons which are full of pitiful discussion regarding the efficiency and sufficiency of

the atonement. It was presented not as a matter of speculation, but of faith, and while it came home with force and impressiveness to the heart and conscience, discouraged all vain disputation regarding the nature and extent of the atonement. There were some things stated which were not strictly in accordance with generally received views. The preacher strongly stated that "man could not add to the glory of God." The old divines insisted, that while man could not add to the *essential* glory of God, he did and ought to add to his declarative glory. The first question of our Catechism teaches that man may in some form add to the glory of God, and Paul commands the Corinthians to do all—whether they eat or drink, &c.—to the glory of God. The preacher also stated that the apostle Peter, when he speaks of a more sure word of prophecy, cannot mean that prophecy, or anything else, can be surer than the evidence of the sight or the senses. The preacher here joined issue with philosophy, and, we suspect, with fact. The evidence of the senses is not the surest. Especially is the evidence of sight deceptive. The preacher has not forgot his classical *deceptio visus*, or deception of the sight. Our forefathers saw ghosts, but their sons, now more philosophical, see none. Again the preacher speaks of three faiths. Those who believe that the gospel is a fable—those that it is a set of opinions—and those that know and believe it as a system of facts. Now, we doubt whether the two first can be called faiths, for they are rather "*unbeliefs*," if there was such a word. They are negatives, or denials of Christianity, and cannot with any regard to propriety of language be called faiths. These and some other matters were somewhat unguardedly stated. Indeed, we never before heard a preacher so correct in the general, incorrect in particulars. His discourse displayed great comprehensiveness of mind, and great power of thought, while some of his details displayed a haste almost incompatible with general accuracy. The mistakes were obviously the result of haste, and a little more care will entirely prevent them. The preacher is evidently possessed of powers of a superior order, and were his health as good as his abilities, minor defects would speedily disappear.

Mr Buchanan was born near Chryston, where he was educated

until sent to Glasgow College in 1835. He there took the degree of A.M. with honourable distinction. He was licensed December, 1843. He preached his first sermon at Bothwell in a hay-loft, and was ordained July, 1844. At his first day's service, June, 1843, the congregation numbered eleven persons, and it now numbers 350, with Sabbath-schools, and a flourishing day-school in Uddingston. The church and school are free of debt. The teacher's house is recently completed, and the manse is nearly so. The congregation includes a number of the most respectable families of the place.

MARCH 31, 1849.

REV. J. B. SMITH,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GREENOCK.

On Sabbath last, Mr Smith preached in the United Presbyterian Church, North Albion Street, Glasgow. The subjects discussed were not new—Christianity is not—nor possibly were they likely to be relished by those who adhere to those misty preachers, generally called profound. The teaching was too palpable to be misunderstood. Fortunately for many, unluckily perhaps for a few, there was no necessity in utterly wasting the rest of the day in buffeting about in a cloud of philological and theological fog in search of a precious ray of light supposed to be astray somewhere. There could be no mistake about the language, or the ideas which it conveyed. Simple, yet not meagre, transparent, yet substantial, encouraging without inspiring presumption, and attractive with exceedingly little allowable ornament, these discourses must have been at once interesting to the refined and to the comparatively illiterate. Their vigorous freshness was their great charm. They owed nothing to poetry or philosophy. Their theology is not the science to be dug out of dingy and dusty tomes of huge form and scholastic mouldiness, but the theology which so brightly shines on the whole surface of the Bible.

As a preacher, Mr Smith cannot make the slightest pretensions to the abstruse, for which his congregation have every reason to be thankful. He lacks the talent, perhaps it may be the inclination, of putting a text to the torture to give up secrets which it never possessed. He does not astonish his hearers by a vast display of critical acumen, by telling them how many different constructions a fragment of scripture can

bear, how many it may bear, and how many it is utterly impossible to get out of it. These ingenious dislocations and replacements of texts so fashionable with some preachers, he has the good sense not to indulge in. It is a question if he has all his life made a discovery of the capabilities of some scriptural phrase that nobody has ventured on before. If he has gained no renown from the want of such enterprise, he has left his own faculties unclouded, and has not, if the expression be allowed, chloroformed his audience. A few of those very long-headed uneasy old worthies, who doat on those muddy ponds called "deep preachers," may be saved the pleasure of setting their brains a-hunting in pursuit of the incomprehensible, and be unhappily rendered miserable by being unable to misunderstand. Judging from what we know of the preacher, he has no taste for the theological diggings. He finds no necessity for mining through masses of earth for some glittering pebble, when the treasures of the kingdom lie so profusely scattered on the surface. He does his fellow-men a nobler and a better service. He shows them where priceless gems, and the golden and amaranthine flowers of heaven may be picked up, and plucked by every willing hand.

For a preacher who so unflaggingly sustains the interest of his pulpit ministrations, he is little indebted to fancy. The spoils of imagination, illustrations borrowed from the beauty and grandeur of the natural world, even those innumerable helps from the sciences and the mechanical arts which the preacher of the highest order so skilfully impresses into the service of religion he sparingly resorts to, and then sometimes with not the happiest effects. The exquisitely coloured drapery in which only a comparatively small number can render truth so winning, is not, with the exception of a fragment, at his disposal. Presenting religion to his hearers in its loveliest simplicity, its charms will more readily influence the heart, and prove more permanent in results on the minds of the majority than the showier and less abiding creations of the imagination. And—what we consider no mean compliment—he is not by any means a spicy preacher. His sermons do not at all smack of cayenne. One need not go to him in expectation of catching a lot of pungent, startling sentences which pleasurably excite

at the moment, but which it is quite impossible to carry home in one's head for future cogitation and use. Of all classes of preachers these sayers of nice, smart, pithy little religious nothings, are the worst. The effect produced by these clever preachers is as evanescent, as the smartness is generally sudden and unexpected. The effervescence, like that of a bottle of champagne, speedily expires by reason of its own briskness, and leaves a residuum, weak, tasteless, and insipid. The subject of our sketch is the antipodes of a class such as this. Neither does he attempt to add to the strength of an argument by a blow on the bookboard, nor substitute a cambric *mouchoir* or graceful wave of the hand, for a paucity of ideas. He is all ideas. His discourse overflows with them. Though he speaks, and speaks well, he does not so much speak as think aloud. Every sentence is full of meaning. There is no unnecessary waste of words, but every idea is garbed in simple and expressive diction, and pushed out to do its work and make room for others. And this work cannot be in vain if religion has any charms, and an earnest, vigorous, and healthful common sense advocacy has not failed to recommend them. His great mental characteristic is shrewdness. He seizes at once on the plain and obvious meaning of the text, and lays it before his hearers in the manner and style of a man who thoroughly understands and appreciates what he is speaking about, and will make others do the same. He does not require to bustle, or pad, or trick out his thoughts to make them pass current for a great deal more than they are worth. He has too much tact and common sense to attempt the one or desire the other. He exhibits wondrously few symptoms of a desire to preach himself, his acquirements, or his creed, but is satisfied with the simple majesty of the gospel, which he delineates as one of surpassing mercy, and proclaims its great gain in a style which awakens exertion, and soothes while it stimulates.

The pulpit appearances of Mr Smith are much beyond the average. His voice is clear, distinct, and naturally fine, but suffered to run to seed through inattention. From this neglect his speaking is not unfrequently monotonous. Yet there is no deficiency of liveliness; we mean to say that he is one of the liveliest of preachers, but he does not turn to the fullest

account all his natural advantages of voice and gesture. His delivery is, at least, without the slightest verge on the violent. His action is without vehemence, and his fluency free of volubility and verbosity. No one could charge him with giving a word too quickly or too much. While the hearer is saved from what is poetically called a torrent of eloquence—too much of a good thing at the best, nothing but a cataract of frothy unmeaning verbiage at the worst—the ear is not pained by those violent altitudes of the voice which make “the half asleep start up with fear,” anon to sink down to that interesting style of word-breathing in which a pin is said to be experimenting on the laws of gravity. His voice is also free of that drawling sing-song style which some appear to imagine is inseparable from the delivery of the most important of messages. His prayers are unexceptionable and scriptural, for they are the Scriptures themselves. Few preachers incorporate so well in their appeals and ascriptions the beautiful and expressive phraseology of the Bible. None will question the pleasure and beneficial effects derived from the proper reading in public of passages of Scripture. It is an art which cannot be too highly cultivated, yet it is too often neglected. Mr Smith, while, perhaps, in this he is equal to forty-nine out of every fifty of his brother clergymen, does not excel—and this from his own indifference—in the reading of the Scriptures. He is much too hurried in that to which all the powers of the understanding and capabilities should be given. He is merely an ordinary reader, when he could easily be a good one.

The personal appearance of Mr Smith in the pulpit is much in his favour. His brow is high and intellectual, and his countenance is thoughtful and expressive.—He is perfectly free from every taint of affectation, and his actions and mode of delivery are altogether unconstrained and natural. Fortunately for himself and his people he cannot ever have been what is called a popular preacher. Such are apt to be spoiled by vanity, and the desire of the superficial and unthinking for excitement. Yet he is popular in the best sense of the term. Unaffected and eloquent, thoughtful, appreciable, and encouraging, and possessing and insisting on a catholicity of sentiment which does honour to his heart and his theology, he is

eminently the preacher of all classes. If he is not of the first order of preachers, he is undoubtedly of a class whose influence and power cannot be calculated, and whose energy and usefulness are beyond estimation.

The Rev. John B. Smith is the son of respectable parents now entered on their rest, who, while they lived, moved in an humble sphere. He is, we believe, a native of Hamilton, where he spent the years of his infancy and boyhood. When he formed the resolution to become a minister, he forthwith began to battle with many difficulties, and soon thereafter entered Glasgow College. His university career was marked by that diligent attention to his duties, and honourable perseverance, which gained him a respectable status amongst his fellows. Having run the necessary curriculum, and undergone with credit the preliminary presbyterial examination, he was certified to the then Secession Hall. During the session 1846 he was the secretary, and during that of 1847, the vice-preses of the Students' Missionary Society. While a divinity student, Mr Smith was a resident in Glasgow, and was, for several years, connected with the City Mission, of which he proved not the least successful agent. His career as a student having terminated, Mr Smith was licensed by the Glasgow Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, on Wednesday the 8th of February, 1848. Happily his name did not long remain on that very suggestive roll, "the Preacher's List." On the 22d of June of the same year, he received a unanimous call from the congregation assembling in Union street chapel, Greenock, and amidst the general rejoicings and hearty welcomes of the people, he was ordained their minister on Tuesday the 10th of October, and has laboured since with general acceptability and success.

He is not deeply versant with ancient lore, but has knowledge thereof sufficient to enable him to satisfactorily explain the sacred oracles of God. His reading has been chiefly professional and practical. His mind is characterised by what is called "clear-headedness"—being possessed of a very large share of that quality denominated "common sense." Clearness of perception—the ability to quickly comprehend an argu-

ment, detect its sophistry, or seize upon its pith—he unquestionably possesses, and that perhaps not in an ordinary degree. His judgment is sound. Neither in forming opinions will he be rash—nor in coming to decisions will he be hasty—nor in performing actions will he be imprudent. He will ever be a sober and sedate truth-seeing, truth-seeking man. If Mr Smith *possesses* imagination we would recommend him to give it fuller play—to throw its reins loose a little more. Mr Smith is a gentle satirist, and loves his joke. Hence we would suppose that he will shine fully more on the platform than in the pulpit. Never will he seek to *wound*, but in many jocularly ironical ways he will be sure to *strike* the heart.

APRIL 28, 1849.

REV. GEORGE LEWIS,

FREE ST DAVID'S, DUNDEE.

To a certain class of men success in whatever sphere of life they may occupy is a matter of positive certainty. These are our slow plodding working persevering men—even not distinguished by any remarkable gift—of no great genius, but only of indefatigable determination. They never rise to eminence, sometimes to notoriety, but not often to fame of permanent character. They are simply useful men, when with efforts properly directed, and troublesome when misdirected. They do not come meteor-like to dazzle the star-gazers of earth, take none by surprise with an unexpected appearance, and never probably in the course of life do any one thing remarkable. In the path they pursue they keep the beaten track, make no new discovery, and attempt none. They are not allured aside by any syren song, nor are temptations of honour, fame, or power, sufficient to entice them out of the old road. They never originate any measure, never devise any scheme; but when another does, they work it out. They are not the pioneers of a great work—they do not choose the quarry, but they hew the stones. Such men in mercantile life rise to opulence by slow but steady progression. They take a firm clutch of the sides of the ladder, mount it step by step, never wish for angel wings to raise them suddenly to the summit, but are content to struggle thither like mortals. They arrive, we say, in the mercantile world, at proprietorship of factories, long ranges of warehouses, comfortable country seats, county magistracies, and other nameless honours of independence. In literature they never get beyond the office of a hack, till esta-

blished as proprietors and publishers. In the sacred office of the ministry there are many of them—they go along with majorities, vigorously supporting the measures of the leaders of their parties. They do more—they work out these measures, counting them always infallible, and themselves, when opposed, persecuted. They are invaluable in their office. Society could not exist without them. The church would advance in nothing save in schemes, were it not for their aid. A hive could as well spare its building bees—a house its constructors. They are not honoured, nor valued, however, as they merit. The praise rests on the designers, the blame on the workers, when the design fails. The height, not of their ambition, but of their temporal reward, is the degree of D.D. We marvel that amongst the crowd of degrees now flourishing in the clerical almanac, it has not been our privilege to add these initials to the title of our sketch.

The Rev. George Lewis has acquired a deserved measure of celebrity in the Free Church for years past. He has been one of its most useful and one of its most zealous ministers. He has supported unweariedly all its schemes with larger success than almost any other of its pastors. He has counted it all honour to devote his talents and energies in its cause without consideration of aught else than how he could best promote it. His exertions have been stimulated with a sense of pressing duty, and have been rewarded in many cases with deserved success.

Mr Lewis' personal appearance denotes strongly the characteristics of his mind. In size he is about middle stature, not yet robust, but approaching gradually towards a certain rotundity of figure. His features are regular and firm, lacking any marked expression further than a certain determined cast which may appear more prominently in discussion, but which is usually overspread with a geniality of benevolence. His hair is scant and thin, giving him a more elderly look than he really owns, and which would add still more to it did not the comfortable, unmarred countenance beam so placidly beneath it. We have called the expression of his features determined, we should have said energetic rather. He seems to be a man who would at once seize the one side of an idea, and never quit it.

Conviction would not dawn slowly and strugglingly in his mind. What to many were mists he could penetrate at once, but the glorious results which many a toiling struggling spirit, attaining a truth participates of, he could not share in. Once directed, his mind would plump down upon its position, hold tenaciously by it, and vigorously defend it.

There are two classes of ministers of which it is difficult to define the most useful—the man distinguished for his preaching talent, and the working minister. Both are seldom combined in one individual. A man who attains to eminence as a preacher or teacher of his fellow-men, can only do so by long laborious effort. He must have something more of inspiration than falls to the lot of his fellows. Armed with high and holy purpose, his heart, his soul, his intellect, need be devoted solely almost to one great end. He cannot handle other weapons. He cannot fight in other warfare. He cannot stand in the lists of the partisan. His name cannot be the shibboleth of controversy—for controversy only at a distance teaches. A true teacher never dies; controversy perishes, and controversialists perish, as hoar frost before the sun. Truth is of God, and eternal; controversy of man, and short lived. Therefore a teacher cannot shout a war-cry continually. A minister eminent as a preacher, is necessitated to devote most of his time to the one object. Kindred objects he may encourage and aid, but hardly can be distinguished in connexion with them. We are aware of exceptions to this, as to every rule, but we speak merely of general facts—facts which must have come under the observation of most of our readers. Your working pastor, on the other hand, is seldom highly distinguished for preaching gifts. His labours are diffuse, directed to many points, to all points more or less beneficial to his flock, or more or less beneficial to the section of the church he belongs to. His peculiar sphere may be visiting his flock, counselling them, educating them, or promoting such schemes amongst them as may tend to their good and the good of the church, or his energies may be devoted to one particular point. He may be a man of war or a man of peace. He may be an educationist, a politician, a reformer, an improver, or the representative of one of the legion of measures advocated for general good. As

a preacher, the subject of our sketch does not rank with the first in the body to which he belongs. In the pulpit he is energetic, lively, and sometimes eloquent. His discourses are instructive and faithful. In style he is perspicuous and facile, though not highly polished. His command of words is considerable, and his manner attractive. There is lacking that power which sways the hearts and feelings of an audience. Lacking the grasp upon the mind which genius takes, he can instruct his audience, can move them, but cannot enchain them. You are never startled by an unexpected idea, never led into a field of conjecture by a new or original view of any divine truth. No flash of light illumines a doubtfully interpreted passage, no new application strikes suddenly upon you of an old, oft thought over text. Nor does he lead his hearers astray in the meshes of a bewildering interpretation. He flits not out of the good old path—seeks to cull no flowers that grow not by its sides, and which have oft been culled before. Mr Lewis does none of these things in his preaching—he attempts none of them. There is an air of hearty sincerity in it, and a great proportion of strong common sense. Nature never designed him for a genius, a poet, or an orator, and he never sickened an audience by attempting to seem any of them. His preaching is faithful, addressed impartially as by the messenger of God to all men—knowing no distinction of class, or difference of character—but warning every man, instructing every man. His warmth and his earnestness impress, and his zeal arouses.

As an advocate of any church scheme Mr Lewis is invaluable. He has all the essential qualities of success in him. Once impressed with an idea, he will fight till the last for it. Once undertaking a cause, he will struggle through every obstacle in maintaining it. Largely endowed with a sanguine disposition, and the gift of perseverance, whether success attend his efforts or not, they will not soon be renounced. His opinions, like the rolling snowball, gather strength with motion—they do not split in contact with heavier matter, but become hedged in and fortified till they wear a strong affinity to infallibility. Mr Lewis has been much engaged in agitation connected with the Free Church; first for the principles of the

body, and afterwards for its schemes. Some years ago he formed one of a deputation sent to America—of that deputation of unhappy notoriety in connexion with the blood-money of slaveholders. This has been an unfortunate business for the church, and will prove a lasting stain on its garments. Mr Lewis, however, as the leaders whitewashed the matter, felt also bound to support its justifiableness. This he did in a volume of some seven hundred pages, entitled, “*Impressions of America and American Churches.*” The volume, although valuable for its criticism on America and Americans; of much and varied interest, and possessing no inconsiderable literary merits, failed to impress the public much. It appeared as the advocate of a bad cause, or the public believed it to be such, and refused to read. We need add nothing: the supporters of that deputation’s proceedings cannot be convinced of aught amiss, or they would have been long ago. They view the matter through a medium of their own, peculiarly their own, and they are welcome to the privilege. “He that is right in a wrong way—is wrong.” In whatever matter he has been engaged, Mr Lewis has not failed in success. The efforts of some men invariably go wrong. They seem born to failure. Whatever they attempt, or are employed to do, is certain to turn out a decided error. A dismal fatality accompanies all their plans, and misfortune stalks at their heels. No matter whether they have a bad measure or a doubtful one to support, or a good one to introduce, the result is invariably the same. Mr Lewis, however, either in a matter wherein there may be a difference of opinion as to it, or in one the good of which cannot be questioned, leaves it the better of his aid. His energy, his perseverance, his tact, and thorough-going heartiness, are qualities which, exercised as by him, render him a valuable auxiliary in whatever cause he may undertake.

The great scheme or object which, like the dream sheaf of Joseph, has reared itself in his mind above all others, has been that of education. In connexion with this his name has acquired no little celebrity. For many years he has been a warm and consistent promoter of its interests in every respect. His idea has been a universal education—an education of every child in Britain, no matter by what means. He has not been

a stickler for the stupid objection of sects and denominations, or their equally stupid preferences in this matter. "Get the people educated," has been his motto. If the state will do it, let them do it; concur with them heartily, it is their duty. If you will not let it thus be done, pray let us do it ourselves. Why should you oppose the doing of what you know to be positive good by others, and yet remain yourself inert? This, alas, has been the absurd and wilfully sinful policy of Christian bodies in our land. In connexion with Mr Lewis' church, and in Dundee, he has been the agent in establishing more than one educational movement, and devotes much of his time and attention to their progress.

Mr Lewis is a native of Glasgow—once a well known and honoured citizen. For many years he edited the Scottish Guardian newspaper, with advantage to the paper and to his own personal credit. Subsequently he received a call to Perth, where for some time he laboured with great acceptability, and from which he removed to his present sphere of duty. In addition to the volume on America noticed, he has published a number of small works connected with education. As a writer, his style is plain, vigorous and forcible, it is not polished, nor does he betray much originality of thought. He employs the hammer, and not the divining rod. He drives truth into the rock, but does not melt the rock. He constrains a reader rather than wins him, yet withal, though his books are such as may not win him posthumous fame, they are calculated to prove useful, and have in many cases been so.

Dundee has many honoured ministers—some on whom the mantle of the old prophets has descended. Not the least of these is the Rev. George Lewis.

REV. ANDREW ROBERTSON,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, STOW.

MAN's external senses do much more than connect him with the external world—they are the avenues to the soul—the inlets of those facts and impressions which form and determine the character. National and individual character in great measure depends on the external scenes with which converse is held. That there is in souls a sympathy with sounds, the music and literature, and character of nations, significantly declare. The Italian handles his lyre softly, for his soul has had its powers developed under a soft and sunny sky, and amid objects of simplicity and beauty. The bard of Caledonia seizes his lyre “with ardent grasp and strong,” for he has been cradled in the land of the mountain and flood—of storm and hurricane. Who can describe the power of sounds on that shepherd who now listens to the mountain thunder and the mountain torrent?—to the shriek of the wild bird, or the more terrible howl of the beast of the forest? or to his own simple reed, discoursing rude music, but music still in unison with the scenes and circumstances with which he is familiar. Music charms the savage breast, and it is music that communicates to the most refined many of the most pleasurable emotions. Even the inferior creation are not insensible of the power of voice. The sheep of old knew the shepherd's voice, and domestic animals leap for joy as they hear the accents of their master. Jehovah, in his dealings with man, recognises this power over him. The law was given amid voices and cloud and tempest, and on the advent of Christ angels sweetly hymned to the shepherds in Bethlehem, Peace on earth, and

goodwill to men. To man no voice is so sweet—when understood—as the voice of mercy. He who came to save man spoke as never man spoke—grace was poured from his lips. His was the voice of the charmer that compelled the ear of avowed enemies. The very highest pleasure man can enjoy is communicated through the ear. God still speaks to man by a small voice, and though the chief thing is the message, the way in which it is delivered has a powerful effect. The terrors of the law were expressed in harsh thunder—the message of the gospel was first communicated, accompanied by the music of heaven. Angels tuned their harps anew, and sung to man what was to be sung and said in all ages by human agents. The gospel of the grace of God has a power in it which no disadvantage of communication can neutralise. Every word may be mispronounced—every syllable may be misaccentuated—every sentence may be disjointed—and still power and pathos may remain; but the gospel appears in its primitive form and in its primitive power when its language is that of poetry, and the voice that conveys it to the human ear is the voice of the charmer, and in such a way is the gospel preached by the subject of our sketch. Last Sabbath we had the privilege of hearing him for nearly two hours, and the great congregation felt the spell of the magician. At the announced hour he was in the pulpit, and, after the introductory services—which occupied half an hour—he announced for his text Hebrews xii. 1, “Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,” &c. He commenced by saying that in the chapter preceding the words of his text the apostle had adduced a number of Old Testament examples of the nature and efficacy of faith, and the text is designed to teach the Hebrews and to teach us the practical use such examples should serve. Believers are represented as in a race, while patriarchs and prophets are spectators. Several things present themselves for consideration. There is in the text the race—the preparation for running it—the spirit that should actuate those engaged in it—and the reason or motive to urge the runner on. There is, first, the race, or course, set before us. As in the Grecian games, which probably suggested the figure used by the apostle, the course was accurately prescribed,

and the duties distinctly pointed out, so is it with the Christian in this course. In the Bible we find laid down for our instruction the truths we are to believe, and the duties we are to perform. These truths are not such as the world believes. There are mysterious truths, such as the Trinity in the Godhead—the union of two natures in the person of Christ—and these are often regarded as false and contradictory. There are other truths which refer to things unseen and eternal, and these the world deem visionary and illusive. There are humbling truths—such as the degeneracy of man and the doctrines of the cross, which the world cannot receive—doctrines which are to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks foolishness. Then the duties prescribed to those who would run a race are still less relished by the world. These are twofold—such as grow out of the character of the Christian system, and those taught by the moral law. The duties of the gospel are repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. The new commandment and the other duties that spring from new relationships, &c. Let us consider the various views of the Christian life that a race suggests. 1st. The case of a runner suggests the strenuous efforts he must put forth; 2d. The Christian life may be compared to a race, because progress is to be made; 3d, and finally, A runner in a race has a prize in view, and so is it with the Christian. We consider the second branch of our subject:—The preparation for this race. That preparation consists in laying aside every weight, and the sin that most easily besets us. The competitor in the Grecian games laid aside his loose or flowing garments that his progress might not be impeded. Those not yet entered on the Christian race might here be urged to renounce their sins. This is, indeed, a task too great for such, but Christ promises his aid. The text contemplates, however, chiefly those already on the Christian journey. With such much corruption still remains, and occasionally breaks forth. The clause “every weight” refers, in the general, to whatever is inconsistent with Christian practice. The latter clause—the sin that doth so easily beset us—is more definite. Some think it refers to the sin of unbelief, and no prayer is more needed than the prayer that our

faith may fail not. Others suppose the clause to refer to the sin to which, individually, Christians are liable. We are to run it with patience or perseverance. Viewing the word in the sense of patience the Christian must be prepared to meet difficulty, and in patience possess his soul. Taking the word in the sense of perseverance, the Christian must persevere to the end. This is necessary to success in a race. If the runner stop short there will be no reward; and here, for the encouragement of the Christian runner, a prize awaits each. One or two only were successful in the Grecian games, but here all may so run as to obtain. Lastly, the reason adduced in the text is, "We are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." The language here may be considered figurative, as it cannot literally be applied in every respect. It is too much, perhaps, to suppose that the saints actually look down from their lofty seats to witness the conflict here, for though there is joy in the presence of angels over every repenting sinner, it is probably better to suppose the text as teaching that we should so run, as if all the saints in heaven were spectators of our progress. The preacher concluded with an earnest and eloquent appeal to different classes, to induce men to enter on the Christian race, and to encourage those already on their way to Zion. He concluded his discourse at twenty-five minutes to one, having preached about an hour. After the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed at a quarter to one.

In the afternoon, he commenced the service at the announced hour. After the usual introductory services—with the exception that no chapter was read either at this or the forenoon service—he gave out as his text, Isaiah li. 6, "Lift up your eyes," &c. He said that the chapter where the text is, as well as much that precedes it, was written to cheer the Jews when captives in Babylon. Isaiah foretels the doom of their oppressors and their own deliverance. But he passes from the near to the more remote, from the temporal to the eternal. He passes from the deliverance by Cyrus to the greater deliverance by Christ. The preacher then went on to point out the lessons to be learned from looking with devout eye to the

heaven above, and on the earth around and beneath us. He then contrasted the fleeting character of the material universe with the permanence of the righteousness and salvation of Christ, and proceeded to prove the proposition that the salvation of the saints will be everlasting. This he did by the following arguments:—1st. It will be everlasting, for God so wills it; 2d. The infinite greatness of Christ's work leads us to infer that the salvation will be everlasting. The price is worth the purchase; 3d. It will be everlasting, because essential to the happiness of the Redeemer and redeemed; 4th. It may be inferred to be everlasting from the penal character of death; 5th. It will be everlasting, because it is impossible to assign any reason or motive which would lead God to limit its continuance. These particulars he illustrated at considerable length, and summed up with an impressive peroration. He preached about fifty minutes.

The first discourse is one of very great excellence. The figurative character of the text renders it difficult, but the preacher proved himself quite equal to meet the difficulty. He kept the figure sufficiently in view, without slavishly adhering to it in all its aspects. Many, in order to "keep up their texts," treat figures as if they were facts, and facts as if they were figures; but in this case the figurative character of the text was duly observed throughout the entire discourse. The leading ideas it suggested were wrought out, while the details of figure were very properly overlooked. The mapping of the sermon was excellent—including and exhausting all the leading ideas of the text. The illustrations were apt, popular, and eloquent, and the conclusion was inferential, earnest, and resistless in appeal. The preacher used no notes, and yet throughout the entire discourse he never showed the slightest embarrassment or hesitancy. It contained not one incorrect, or ill-arranged, or inelegant sentence, and that is saying more, as far as we are aware, than ever we have said of a discourse, of the same length, delivered without notes. Towards the close, the language flowed more impetuously and more eloquently, till it concluded in one of those outflowings of calm, philosophic appeal, so rare, and yet so effective. The after-

noon's discourse was more ambitious in its range and illustration. The preacher selected one of the most sublime passages that the Bible contains—and it was, indeed, a bold attempt to elucidate such a text. When he read the text, we remembered what Robert Hall said when asked if he had preached on an equally sublime passage—John iii. 16—God so loved the world. No, said that prince of preachers, no, never. I could only repeat the text. It is no disparagement whatever to the powers of the subject of our sketch, when we say, that eloquent as was his discourse, he quailed beneath the sublimity of the text. And how could he do otherwise? He had to hold up a candle to illustrate the light of the sun. He had to match the sublime words uttered under prophetic afflatus. While he preached probably as good and as eloquent a sermon as could be preached, the text stood out in all its unmatched majesty, alike defying comparison and illustration. The discourses both betrayed the following peculiarities of the preacher. The careful observer could not but see that the sermons were the production of a clear and vigorous mind. The outline and filling up were lucid as day. No one who paid attention could but understand every sentence apart, and also its bearing on others. Along with this lucidity great vigour of mind was displayed.—The minds of some are clear because they are shallow and feeble, but his is clear while it is also strong and robust. His enunciations are obviously his own thoughts—which come out fresh from the mint of his own mind. His outline, his illustrations, his language, his style, are all unmistakeably his own. However strong memory might be, it is utterly impossible for any man to deliver the thoughts and language of another with the felicity and force which characterised these sermons. There was poetry in almost every sentence. By poetry, we here mean thought expressed in neat, energetic, and elegant diction—thought on a philosophical substratum—in union with truth and nature. A great authority said that every discourse should be a poem, and we hesitate not to pronounce these discourses as poems in the best sense of that term. But besides the clearness and vigour of our preacher's mind, its judiciousness deserves no-

tice. It has poetical beauty without poetical extravagance. For instance, when speaking of the cloud of witnesses, poetical license would have acknowledged no figure, but would have found in the contemplation of glorified spirits, a suitable theme for illustration and appeal. On the contrary, our preacher admitted the figure, and viewed the text as teaching us that we should act as if these spirits in glory were our constant spectators. The same peculiarity was prominent in all the discourses. The hearer was never startled with the extravagant or the strange. Old truth, truth as old as the Bible—has sufficient charms in his hands without the distortions with which fantastic minds invest it. In the management of the affairs of a congregation, this judiciousness is of the first importance. The man of marvels and miracles is a very unsafe guide, while strong common sense never misleads.

The preacher possesses a great command of language. He has abundance of words, and a ready memory, and good taste selects always the best. The hearer is never annoyed with a second best word being employed. The very word required to give distinctness and vigour to a sentence is always forthcoming, and that accounts for the poetry of his style. His taste is never at fault either in the selection of topics, of thoughts, or of language.

The manner of the preacher is good. His appearance in the pulpit is dignified and imposing. He stands erect as he reads and prays. He makes no gesticulation till he has proceeded somewhat with his discourse, and even after he "has warmed with his subject" his gestures are gentle, and generally graceful. His voice, though a little hard, possesses great power and compass, and he certainly does not spare it at times, though, generally speaking, he is a calm, earnest, energetic, unimpassioned preacher. His appearance is youthful, healthful, and ardent. Though he has been ordained about eleven years, he does not appear to be more than thirty years of age. His forehead is high, his features sharp, and his countenance full of animation and ardour. He is the picture of health, intelligence, and benevolence.

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN,

DUNDEE.

THE catholicity and spirituality of Christianity sever it widely from every other system. A long process of schooling was required to prepare the world for these characteristics. Religion at first, known only as an individual matter, gradually extended till it assumed a patriarchal form, and then a national machinery. Yet after the Jews had been long trained and taught by the significant services of temple worship, where the gentile had a court assigned him, it was to them the most perplexing and confounding of all ideas—the idea of a religious system which would embrace the world. Till the announcement was made by the Saviour of the world, God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, the idea of a religion capable of universal extension, and of an unimposing ritual, had never been entertained, and even at this day the idea of religion being a personal matter, having to do with the subjective mind and the invisible God, is one of the hardest to be understood. Man would fain stamp the religion of Christ with his own littleness, and reduce that which is ethereal in its character, and destined to be universal in its diffusion, to a thing of forms. Yet such is the character of Christianity, that its blessings can be enjoyed by the man that venerates and the man that despises its sectional shibboleths. It can afford to allow its professors to believe what human authority has prescribed, and what human authority has denounced. Men are Christians because they believe the testimony God has given concerning his Son—they are sectionalists, because they believe human testimony. The above re-

marks will serve to illustrate one or two characteristics of the subject of our sketch. A strong intuitive sense of independence and comprehensiveness of mind are manifested in his career. The philosophy, "I am a man," seems to be deeply graven on his constitution. From unjust and usurped authority he sensitively shrinks. We could conceive of him before he had well left his mother's knee, assuming the attitude of defiance of authority unjustly exercised. The playmate that dared to infringe his rights would feel the consequences of his prowess. The teacher that would strain his little brief authority over the young idea (strongly shooting!) would be a marked man for life, and the church court that would lord it over the meanest conscience will evoke a storm sufficient to wither the strongest exotic. A church court he seems to consider a dangerous thing, lest the independence of the individual man, and the liberty of the individual Christian, should be impaired or infringed. We have never heard of his presence in one of the higher courts, even of his own church, and we, probably, have found out the cause. But this somewhat assuming philosophy, "I am a man," is coupled with a wide comprehensiveness of mind. He is not more afraid of individual freedom being curbed than he is of Christianity being shorn of its heavenly catholicity and spirituality. Ecclesiastical machinery he considers necessary for maintaining order in the church, but he fears it often mars and curtails her proportions. Ecclesiastical controversialists he seems to consider as idle disputants, whose work is to strain at gnats while they swallow camels. He sees Christianity to be so imposing and magnificent a structure that he would as soon think of defending the harmony of the material universe as the doctrines of his faith. To a mind like his, Christianity at once appears a resistless and great fact, or a flagrant imposture—a system irradiated with the light of heaven, or an *ignis fatuus* alluring or alarming the simple. Prelections in its defence he may read, and conclude them clever or dull, but essentially and necessarily failures. The scene before him is too magnificent to allow him to give attention to the tattle of some dull guide. He strongly and vividly realises the spirituality and catholicity of the New Testament system, and, with higher intelligences, prefers to gaze on

the vast outline, while controversialists fight about details. Christianity he would deliver from all ecclesiastical forms, and view it as a stupendous system destined to beautify and bless the world. In a word, the subject of our sketch, by a strong sense of individual independence and responsibility, and a wide comprehension of view, is urged to the contemplation of Christianity as unsectarian and universal in its extent, and spiritual in its character. To interfere with the full liberty of the individual conscience, he considers the most impious sacrilege—an attempt to destroy the first principles of Protestantism, and subvert the character, and supersede the design of the gospel of God. But in common with the independence and comprehensiveness of his mind, its boldness must be noticed. While the wide range he takes of subjects prevents hasty and partial judgments, his mental intrepidity qualifies him for the most hazardous attempts. His axiomatic philosophy, “I also am a man,” raises him to a level with men of greatest fame, and hence he requires no apologies when he salutes them as equals or inferiors. Those whose names have hitherto secured them from attack, he assails as if they were heard of for the first time yesterday. On the one hand he has canonised those whom religious people think of only with a shudder; and on the other, condemned to the shades those deemed stars of dazzling splendour. A blemish is not the less a blemish because it is on the brow of beauty, and a gem is not the less precious because it has hitherto been hidden among rubbish. Where is the literary or ecclesiastical Goliath who bears not on his brow the mark of a stone—not always smooth—from his unerring sling? He seems to delight to knock his head against authority, and to beat down the man whom the world has been industriously propping up. He not only marches to the edge of the precipice, but he plunges right over, and that which would kill ordinary men, proves to him an exhilarating recreation. In a word, such is his mental intrepidity, that he could not only take command of a channel fleet on half an hour’s notice (as was alleged of the present premier), but he could sail the fleet against a Spanish armada.

This boldness is occasionally coupled with something approaching to incoherence. He sometimes seems terrified at his

own creations. He raises spirits at whose presence he shrinks. Instead of describing the hero he introduces, he proceeds to describe a dozen others, and not because they are like his hero, but because they are unlike him. He seems to hate the idea of leaving his hero alone. If he is about to flay him, he wishes to gather around him a host of associates, collected on the most unaccountable principles; and if he wishes to crown him, it is in the presence of an applauding crowd. He would not risk to be in his study with his one hero. Suppose Carlyle is to be painted, he must have present Shelley, Byron, Emerson, Burns, Aird, &c., for what purpose, some might find it difficult to say. It cannot be to keep him in countenance if he assails his hero, for he is bold enough; and it cannot be to praise his performance, for he has independence enough to scorn flattery. They are present to hear their doom, to get their measure taken, to bring out, by contrast or comparison, the dimensions of his character. It would, however, tend greatly to improve his portraits, would he keep by his one subject, and let others "bide their time." This incoherence, or diffusiveness of genius, is occasionally visible in his discourses. He scatters gems around him, but they must be gathered, arranged, and set, ere their full brilliancy can shine out. Thoughts there are, plenteous and sparkling, but instead of an unbroken train of ratiocination, they are placed in contrast or opposition, or juxtaposition.

Decision is another prominent feature in his mental character. The very stamp of his foot, the strokes of his pen, the sound of his voice, all betray this quality. We saw him obliterate from a MS. certain paragraphs he wished to suppress, and instead of the slight pencil mark he firmly seized the pen, and drew bold strokes in plenty along the doomed pages. To this decision of character the great amount of work he performs must be attributed. Most men lose three-fourths of their time by impotent purpose. They propose, and plan, and resolve, but they seldom act. Purpose and action with him are synchronous. Soon as he purposes he executes. What his hand finds to do, he does it with his might. He does everything in its time, and leaves nothing that should be done to-day till to-morrow.

But we must not overlook the subject of our sketch as a public speaker. And in considering him as a speaker, it is necessary to consider him at the same time as a poet. As a poet thinks as no other man, so also does he speak as no other. A poet may be able to convey his thoughts to paper, but it is not easy to convey them to the "fleshy tables of the heart." As a writer, he is a hind let loose; as a speaker, he is somewhat fettered. He stands erect, with countenance radiant and uplifted, and eye flashing, and hand aloft, struggling to express thoughts too big for expression. He gives great conceptions birth, but they struggle as they come forth. It is Vesuvius labouring to pour forth the contents of its burning bosom, scattering its lava at the feet of the astonished spectator. Altering the figure, the outgate is too small for the gathering, swelling flood. The utterance is earnest, vehement, but it wants smoothness and finish. He labours heavily, but the thoughts are worth the effort, and the lack of ease is amply compensated by the ardour and earnestness of the manner and the splendour of the style. His voice is somewhat hard, and he raises it to a high pitch—sometimes higher than it properly admits. We refer to his more extemporaneous efforts when he preaches without notes, and without very careful preparation. When his discourse is before him, he delivers with more ease and fluency. We shall not call him a very graceful reader, for were his manner half equal to his matter, no church would contain the crowds that would collect; but there is nothing in his manner repulsive. His action is animated, and his gestures natural. Energy and earnestness characterise his delivery more than grace or ease.

A more brilliant name in the literature of the day than that of George Gilfillan it would be difficult to point out. As a bold and animated essayist, the most poetical of all poet-lecturers, the most original of writers in a literary era when every writer exercises a style of his own, the fame of his eloquence is world-wide. He is comparatively little known as a preacher. The bright glow of the press has absorbed the more subdued and obscurer rays of the pulpit. His preaching excites more surprise than reflection. It dazzles, but fails to irradiate the mental vision of the majority. He is a poet-preacher, and as

such will never reach the mass. The converts to an earnest, high-toned, spiritual, practical Christianity, will be necessarily few by means so extraordinary. He does not present doctrines in the same light as other ministers. In the region of creeds he sits as one melancholy in a dry place, imagines he has no business there, and would be much more comfortable were he out again. He presents nothing which the mind of the common, dull clay hearer, can readily grasp. As well might a child try to embrace those rays of the sun in which it sees the motes dancing like disembodied spirits of Lilliput. He seldom argues, but flings from him in boundless profusion, terse, startling, vigorous thoughts, dressed in rainbow language, or lurid with the red glare of the thunderbolt.

He requires a fit audience, though few. He can only be appreciated by those whose minds approach in earnestness and culture his own burning intellect. His sermons are magnificent prose poems, to which all science and literature contribute. The wide domains of nature are ransacked for imagery. Under his magic rod all inanimate nature springs into life and power. The mountains start from the slumber of ages, and dance with joy, and shout to the vallies that sleep in sunshine at their feet; the eloquent stars are the eyes of the Infinite, watching over man in the darkness and quietude of the night; the forest sounds, as the summer evening breeze steals in fragrance through the foliage, are the rapt breathings of nature's adoration; "old ocean," in merry mockery of heaven, smiles back its blue skies and floods of golden sunshine, and in mirthful prodigality scatters innumerable fragments of countless suns over his shining countenance. Sunshine and storm, the flower and the rock, the clear blue sky and the thundery cloud, the earthquake and volcano, and fertile meadow and refreshing dew, and all that is beautiful and grand on earth, are the obedient slaves of the genius of this preacher.

His discourses, as we have said, are studded with the richest and most gorgeous gems. They are full of poetic fire and fervour. In the earlier part of his ministrations occasional extravagance of thought and style appeared; but experience has removed these excrescences, and his elocution is generally

chaste, and his style comparatively pure. There is sometimes a lack of evangelical matter in his discourses. We should be the last to expect him to preach Calvin or Arminius, or any human authority; but he needs not to blush to preach Christ—to preach the doctrines of prophets and of apostles. His aversion to ecclesiastical names and stereotyped theology must be intense; but it were well to discriminate between technical theology and Scripture truth. There was no cant about the purpose of Whitefield, when he resolved to give in every sermon such an epitome of the truth, of the objective truth of the gospel, as would of itself be sufficient for the subjective mind to believe for salvation, lest it might be to some the last opportunity. This resolve it were well for every preacher to keep in view.

In his appeals and ascriptions in prayer the identity of the man of genius is often destroyed. Where he should be most eloquent, he is sometimes tame and dry. The sublimity of the act, which confers high eloquence on many of the commonest minds, strikes him comparatively dumb. The wings of the eagle are cut. He is no longer as one inspired, heaping all the riches of his fertile mind on the altar. He draws on the commonest common-places of the pulpit, and scruples not to use, at times, the most objectionable of an exploded phraseology. It is when he preaches that he plumes his eagle wing, and soars away into the beautiful regions of a poetical and devout fancy.

George Gilfillan is a determined hater of shams. He will go any distance out of his way for an effective fling at humbug. With all the earnest virtue of the time, it is so imbued and intermixed with pretension, that he must have his blow at cant even at the risk of knocking down something better. On Sabbath night how powerfully did his sarcasm tell of a dignified synod, gravely discussing whether sermons should or should not be read, when infidelity was raising its head with more earnestness and power than in any period of the Christian era. A kindred, though a more profound spirit, who reads his sermons, was sitting in front of the pulpit. Fancy Wm. Anderson and George Gilfillan being compelled to fling by their manuscripts

on the votes of those who can preach equally well, or as some would uncharitably say, equally bad, with or without notes. What a chance for dulness then !

Taking into the fullest consideration all the brilliant productions with which he has enriched the literature of his country, what has he yet accomplished ? Can any one calculate the amount of information he has gleaned from those exquisite papers, lectures, and discourses. Evidencing by his every sentence his thorough mastery of literature and philosophy, he has communicated wonderfully little of his knowledge to others. He is a man of fire and heat that gives little light. If he has a purpose it is yet invisible. He appears to be groping in the glare and glitter of the burning and barren desert for the fresh and lofty mountains from which he can speak to the vallies in a voice of almost immortal power. He has not reached his elevation, his vantage place of power—it may take years, but reach it he must. There is a great mind concealed behind that begemmed and beflowered drapery of speech. Its manifestations will fall as suddenly, as startlingly, and with a vaster effect on the world than did his singularly gorgeous diction and nice critical powers. Life and vigour spared, the George Gilfillan of 1859 will be other than the George Gilfillan of 1849.

Mr Gilfillan is a noticeable, or, as the Scotch would say, a *kenspeckle* man. He is tall, *bairdly*, and energetic, with brow of the highest intellectual mould, and strong, manly and polished bearing, evincing a man that must cut his way in the world. The compact frame, the florid complexion, the determined mouth, the spectacles, the black neckerchief—when out of the pulpit—abhorrent of the most meagre pretensions to shirt collar, and the certainly far from clerical cast of countenance, which in its worst aspects is gloomy enough—when once seen cannot readily be forgotten. There are pleasurable associations connected with these spectacles and that stick—his unfailing companions. Though they have little to do with preaching, we must not forget to mention Mr Gilfillan's conversational powers. In these he has few superiors. Without monopolising more than his due share of consideration and speech, he pours forth facts and illustrations, and racy anec-

notes, in such copious streams as prove that, did he deem it desirable, he could at all times preach without notes.

Yet the strong and robust hero of our sketch has his faults—faults, some of them, that can belong only to men of genius. Swift, in a sermon, said, “There are three sorts of pride—of birth, of riches, and of talents. I shall not speak of the latter, none of you being liable to that vice.” Unlike Swift’s hearers, the subject of our sketch is peculiarly liable “to that vice,” and though he has probably avoided it as much as any other of equal mental power, there are occasional manifestations that might be spared. To his philosophy, “I am a man,” we have no objections, but there is some danger of assuming the definite for the indefinite article. There is occasionally a patronising air in his productions which even a man of genius could do well without. The *man* occasionally assumes the dogmatist and the oracle. Modesty is thought by some to be a virtue, even when coupled with genius. The severity with which he censures would require to emanate from a very perfect source. His house should be impregnable who throws stones at his neighbours. Yet George Gilfillan is not perfect as a writer. His style, always vigorous, is now and then not in accordance with taste. His figures are sometimes mixed and incongruous. We give one specimen from the discourse which follows. There we find a worm standing—a worm six feet high—a worm over its grave—a worm speaking. Now though the Bible speaks of man as a worm, it never thus represents a worm as acting. Worm Jacob, to be sure, thrashes the mountains, but the term Jacob saves the figure from absurdity. But besides the figure being questionable the reasoning is bad. There is no analogy between predicting the time of the coming millennium and the day of one’s death. Those who are very particular as to the fixing of certain dates, profess to found on the Scriptures; but no one in his senses alleges that the Bible says anything about the day of his death. If there is anything absurd in fixing the date of the millennium, it lies not in the impiety of attempting the prophetic, but in faulty hermeneutics.

There is also a few minor defects that might be avoided. We were rather surprised to hear a master in literature com-

mence his Sabbath work with the following solecism:—"Solemnise our minds." If the word solemnise could bear the meaning of to render solemn, it might do, but it has no such authorised meaning. On the same occasion he used the common error, "He charges his angels with folly." The passage reads, "He charged his angels," which may refer to the revolt of fallen angels. It were too much to suppose holy angels guilty even of comparative folly. We had marked several slight mistakes of pronunciation and of syntax, but our space is done. It is an easy matter to find fault. A very small dog can bay the moon, and a very small critic may discover blemishes in the most perfect writer. But while we cheerfully concede vigour, and energy, and originality, and poetry, to the subject of our sketch, we cannot allow that in the minor graces his taste is yet complete. We have no apprehension of anything we could say damaging his reputation—that is quite safe; but we have hopes it may, directly or indirectly, augment his fame. We confess we have scarcely the vanity of the young author who, after he circulated a few numbers of his maiden work, went to bed, and dreamed he felt the earth rocking with its influence, and was disappointed to find, when he awoke, that the earth was stable. All we profess is a hasty and very imperfect sketch of one, whose fame advances steadily as the sun towards the bright meridian; and we consider it, if we may follow out the figure so far, to be about nine o'clock—nine hours up, and three from meridian altitude.

About ten or eleven years ago Mr Gilfillan published a pamphlet, consisting of five discourses. These discourses contained much of that nice discrimination, and speculation, and gorgeous diction, for which he is now so famous; but they were indifferently received by many for what was considered a lack of theology. These were followed by a sermon entitled "Hades," which, as we have never seen, we cannot form any opinion of. It gave great offence to some of his brethren in the ministry, and became the subject of ecclesiastical inquiry. Between three and four years ago, Mr Gilfillan collected, and published, in a handsome octavo volume, his *Gallery of Literary Portraits*, being a series of critical sketches of eminent

literary men, and which had appeared, from time to time, in the columns of the *Dumfries Herald*, a newspaper edited by his friend Thomas Aird. The freshness and originality of style, and intimate acquaintance displayed by the author with the master spirits of the age, created great interest and excitement in the literary world. Since then he has largely contributed to some of the principal magazines and reviews; and our readers must have frequently observed with pleasure that this distinguished writer enriches the columns of the *Glasgow Examiner*. We understand that Mr Gilfillan is preparing for publication a work on the Hebrew Bards and Prophets. From the congeniality of the subject and the studies of the writer, we are inclined to imagine that this will prove the most impressive and interesting of all the author's works.

Like all noted characters, sundry, and curious and dull have been the anecdotes told concerning George Gilfillan. Every Johnson has his Boswell. But it would afford little profit or amusement to the public to be told how our preacher eats his beef, or sips his coffee, or picks his teeth, even were we authoritatively informed of the enteresting facts. A weekly unstamped contemporary gave us some appetible details of how on one occasion Mr Gilfillan was caught in the delectable fact of polishing a sheep's head, making most melodious gastronomic music across its teeth, while he committed mouthful after mouthful of the delicious singed flesh to the mysterious action of the gastric juice, and how the interstices were admirably filled up, with extreme gusto, by gooseberries fresh from the bush. Our readers will probably forgive the lack of such details.

Mr Gilfillan is a native of Comrie, of which town his father was the worthy Secession minister. He was educated in Glasgow, and licensed as a preacher in 1835, and was shortly after ordained in Dundee, and has laboured there since over a large congregation. He is beloved by his people, and is the idol of every literary circle.

JUNE 2, 1849.

REV. JOHN MACFARLANE, LL.D.,

ERSKINE CHURCH, GLASGOW.

EXTREME views have been held of the difference between the gorgeous ritual of the Jewish and the simple ritual of the Christian dispensation. Some seem to assume that because the former was showy and imposing, the latter ought to be inartificial and inattractive. Others take the ground that since Christianity in apostolic ages existed only by suffrance, it should still keep itself very quiet and make as little parade with its ceremonies as possible. In opposition to these views Catholicism takes the ground that it is the perpetuation of the Mosaic institute, and hence glories in its temples, and its altars, and its complex ceremonial. In this, as in most cases, truth may be found between extremes. We need no temple now as a house of prayer for all people, for the hour has come when Jerusalem and Samaria have ceased to be points of national attraction, but that is no reason why each congregation apart should not have a "holy and beautiful house" in which to worship. Even the apostles seemed to have had no objection to worship in the temple. Those who contend for extreme simplicity have often their eye as much fixed on their own pocket as on primitive example. Christians who would confine Christianity to barns and attics allow their modesty to get the better of their common sense. If it was unseemly of the Jews to dwell in ceiled houses while the house of God lay waste, many wealthy Christians may have some difficulty to reconcile the grandeur and glory of their dwellings with the "simplicity" and discomfort of the place where they worship God. It is well that Christianity depends not on any

external attention for its existence or its prosperity, but it is equally well that it can sanctify the most superb erection, and dwell at once in the building of turf and of cut stone. We have always suspected either the intelligence or the honesty of our rich Christian economists. When the circumstances of a congregation are humble and their means limited, let them worship in such a humble house as they can afford—and let that house be their own—but when our merchant princes and our wealthy middle classes call themselves by the name of Christ, let them bring their silver and their gold with them, and let them beautify the house where they weekly assemble for the holiest and noblest of purposes. Thanks to the practical character of our times, theory has but a sorry hold of the congregation, and hence we find, despite theoretical diversities, almost an unvarying practical conformity as regards the article of church buildings. Each sect vies with the others in the beauty and glory of its structures. The cathedral is no longer the exclusive boast of a favoured sect. Dissenting bodies that a few years ago existed by sufferance can now excel the national Church in the magnificence of its temples and the influence of its congregations. These remarks were suggested by a visit last Sabbath to Erskine Church in our city. That church, called by the name of some of the chief founders of the Secession Church—now the United Presbyterian Church—is at once an honour to the congregation and an ornament to the city—and is the exclusive property of the congregation. Glasgow contains not a church of more chaste and showy exterior or of more beautiful and convenient interior. It is entirely what the circumstances of the congregation warrant.

Last Sabbath, at five minutes past eleven, Dr J. McFarlane commenced his usual Sabbath worship by reading the cxxiii. Psalm as the subject of praise. At that time comparatively few of the people had assembled, and they continued to enter till fully twenty minutes past the hour of meeting. The first singing and the reading of a chapter occupied nearly twenty minutes, and the prayer which followed was not over till a quarter to twelve. At seven minutes to twelve, Acts iii. 12—20 inclusive, was read as the subject of lecture. (The

passage relates to the miracle performed by Peter and John, at the beautiful gate of the temple.) The lecturer commenced by stating that two of our Lord's apostles had just performed a miracle at the beautiful gate of the temple. The people were very much astonished at what they had seen, though but recently Christ had performed among them many similar miracles, and perhaps some of them in that very place. The people knew, however, that the great worker of miracles had been put to death, and they did not expect any other would perform the miracles which they had been accustomed to witness during his ministry. Now that they saw a similar miracle, some of them, perhaps, thought that Christ had come back again from the dead. Peter, seeing the superstitious gaze fixed on him and on John, his fellow-apostle, rebuked their mistake by saying, "Why gaze ye at us as if by our own power or holiness we had made this man walk." Had he not rebuked them thus he would have robbed Christ of the honour justly due to him, for in reality Christ wrought that miracle. It was wrought by his power and authority, and in his name. The apostles *knew*—they *felt* they could not do it, and therefore at once disclaimed the credit of it, and gave all the glory to Christ. Two things have to be noticed which they disclaimed as the causes of the miracle—their own *power* and their own *piety*. They virtually said to the people, we have no more credit in it than you have. The practical use of this ought to be to teach us that ministers are only the means in the hands of God. Peter and John did not forbid the manifestation of gratitude, but they forbade that they should be associated with Christ as prime movers in the matter. God only used them as curative instruments, while the virtue proceeded from Himself. Look not to us, as if they said, when sinners are converted, or when saints grow in grace. If you desire to be benefitted by Christian privileges, look to the Lord Jesus Christ for the accompanying blessing. While the genuine believer holds with tenacity the necessity of means, he is at the same time as it were fastening himself on God, who is the author of all spiritual blessings. Peter and John took advantage from the miracle and its effects of preaching Christ. The apostles, as they had disconnected the miracle with two things

—their own power and piety—now gave two things as its cause—the name of Christ, and faith in that name. The name of Christ means Christ himself. Peter includes the faith of the instrument along with the agency. Faith in His name, he says, has made the man strong. Peter and John believed that Christ wrought the astonishing miracle. But do they here, after all, take credit for co-operating with Him? They formerly put themselves out, and do they now put themselves in again? There is a sense in which they might properly mention themselves. Christ hath connected faith in his name with the exertion of his power, both in miracles, and also in the conversion of sinners. Had Peter and John not believed in the power of Christ, no miracle had been wrought. A vital principle is involved here. The miracle was wrought in connection with belief in Christ's power. This shows that ministers should be genuine believers. They ought to taste and see that God is good. If a minister does not preach in faith, he has no right to calculate on success. In verse 17th, Peter kindly admits that the people had crucified Christ in ignorance. He does not deny their guilt. He had just fully proven it, but he here mentions ignorance in mitigation of their crime. In the economy of redemption, repentance must precede pardon, but we cannot be pardoned on the merit of godly sorrow. God says to the penitent, "Go and sin no more." Observe, here, how repentance is associated with the death of Christ, and be specially thankful to God that the gift of his Spirit is as free as the gift of his Son. The discourse was over at 24 minutes to one, having occupied 43 minutes. After prayer, and singing two verses, the benediction was pronounced, and the congregation was dismissed at a quarter to one. Our space excludes an outline of the other services, which were similar in order and length.

From the above, it will appear that the prayer before sermon lasted about twenty minutes, and that the sermon was the ordinary length. The prayer was in many respects peculiar. Reference was made at length to the riots of the preceding week. That depravity, which so fearfully manifested itself, was lamented as common to all men. The reference to these events was made with much fluency, which showed a great

command of language, as the subject was wholly new. The order of the prayer was unexceptionable, and the matter of it was highly appropriate, both as regards general and congregational interests. His attention to the temporal interests of the nation was marked and highly proper; and it is greatly to be regretted that these are wholly overlooked by many preachers. The only thing objectionable was that the style was occasionally colloquial or conversational. Prayer is an appeal to God, and hence those who conduct such an exercise should beware of substituting didactics for devotion. The people are not to be *taught* in prayer, but merely enabled to express what they already know. There is also a dignity of language as well as of demeanour to be observed in this exercise. The discourse or lecture exhibits, in a very marked manner, the chief peculiarities of the preacher. It will be seen, from the outline, that he adopts the Chalmesian style of enunciating only a few ideas, and then illustrates these at great length. The leading ideas are the disclaimer of the apostles as to any share in the energy by which the miracle was accomplished—the part of faith in miracles and in the ordinary work of ministers, and the way of acceptance and pardon through the death of Christ. In lecturing on such a passage most preachers would go into details, and discuss the ideas in each separate verse, but instead of starting a great many thoughts and cramming his discourse with ideas, he gathers one or two from the scope of the passage and illustrates them till they are palpable to those of slowest apprehension. Though this form of teaching is in some danger of degenerating into sameness, unless when strictly founded on the leading ideas of the passage discussed, it is unquestionably the most popular, and probably the most profitable, to the generality of hearers. We have often stated that in most discourses we have too much theology—or rather too much osteology—for theology is often the bare bones of Christianity. Few can learn many ideas at one lesson. The preacher who succeeds in communicating to his hearers one important thought, at each discourse, has no reason to complain of the want of didactical success. Our preacher deals most exclusively in the concrete. He avoids the abstract and obscure, and propounds plain facts stated in

simple language. From admirably defined principles and from important facts he reasons logically and forcibly. His mind is eminently historical, and he generalises with much skill. The facts which lie on the face of the passage he broadly announces, and follows them out in their bearings and consequences till he reach their practical effects. He thinks with such clearness that his conceptions are generally transparent. His meaning every one readily apprehends. His diction is in harmony with the lucidity of his thoughts. Such is his command of language that he always selects words best calculated to give the distinctive meaning which he wishes to express. Nor does he ever attempt to cloud or conceal his thoughts in a gorgeous or complex verbosity. He seldom uses even a difficult term, and never an obscure sentence. The perspicuity of his thoughts and language is probably almost unequalled. Indeed, in some cases he carries his familiar easy style, if possible, too far—using conversational phraseology when the subject demands, or at least would appear more commanding, in more dignified diction. His fluency in speaking is very great. Though he seldom looks at his notes, and often has none to look at, he never hesitates, never stumbles. For any length of time he could speak, and speak with propriety, on any ordinary subject. He is one of those who are in great danger of being tempted to study comparatively little, because they find themselves always able to speak. We do not mean to say that his sermons bear any marks of hasty preparation—we merely state the tendency of those loquacious gifts to divert from severe thought, and to lead to diffuseness of style as well as paucity of thought.

The manner of the subject of our sketch is much more subdued than it was when he came to Glasgow about eight years ago. When he commences to speak he generally places his hands together, and has but little action for a considerable time. As he proceeds with his subject he displays all the gifts of the natural orator. His voice is clear and musical—his gestures are natural and commanding, and the auditor finds himself resistlessly carried along in a torrent of overpowering eloquence. The style may not always be so chaste as it might, but it conveys to the mind the precise ideas intended,

so that the learned and the ignorant—the accomplished and the neglected—are at once and alike instructed and delighted. There is one excellency—which, we regret to say, is rare among clergymen—to which we wish to call particular attention—he reads the Scriptures admirably. Instead of hurrying over the chapter, to allow time for remark, he brings out the beauties of it by reading it slowly, gracefully, and emphatically. We have seldom heard reading which gave so very good an idea of the sense. In reading the historical he accommodates his voice to the scene described, and in reading the colloquial he sustains admirably the different characters who take a part. The change of voice in the scenes described in the chapter read on the occasion referred to—the 27th of Genesis—was such that one almost supposed he heard good old Isaac's voice and that of his sons Jacob and Esau.

Dr Macfarlane, who is a native of Dunfermline, was ordained in Kincardine. After being about ten years in that place he was translated to Glasgow in 1840, to preside over the congregation of the late Rev. Dr Smith, who went to America, and who died about two years ago. The congregation worshipped in Nicholson Street Chapel till they built their present place of worship in South Portland street. The congregation is highly respectable, including a number of our most active and influential citizens. About six years ago the University of Glasgow conferred on him the degree of LL.D. He was an extensive contributor to the *Christian Instructor* and other periodicals. We are not aware that he has published any extensive work.

MARCH 18, 1848.

REV. WILLIAM MENZIES, M.A.,

MAYBOLE.

PREVIOUS to the disruption of the Established Church in 1843, its ministers were divided into two classes, the moderates and the evangelicals. These alternately had the ascendancy, and eventually the latter party, in their power, took steps which unavoidably led to the disruption and its consequences. With many, the name *moderate* is reckoned as containing in it more evil than all the ten plagues of Egypt. A minister may possess many excellent gifts and accomplishments, but if he is a moderate, that is the dead fly in the ointment. He may be incorrupt in life and doctrine, but he is a moderate. He may be learned and able, but what of that?—he is a moderate. He may be eloquent and influential, but he is a moderate. Such is the very summary way that a large class deal with the school called moderatism. It is the unpardonable sin, and all its disciples are doomed and shunned. The more judicious part of mankind inquire a little into the thing, as well as into its name. Many a good man has an ill sounding name, and much that is lightly esteemed among men, and even among Christian men, may not after all be so pestiferous as supposed. As regards the term, it must be admitted that there are several reasons of some weight which draw suspicion on it, though there is no reason, but the contrary, for condemning all branded with its mark. The moderates of the Church of Scotland were those that, prior to the disruption, were satisfied with the order and discipline of the Established Church, or, at least, they held that laws could not be enacted or altered for its governance without the sanction of the legislature. They

held that the veto law, however necessary, was a nullity, because merely the *ultra vires* deed of ecclesiastics, and a deed unratified by the state. Now a candid man will admit, that such a view, whether right or wrong, is a very unsatisfactory reason for unchristianising a man, but a pretty large party think it quite sufficient, and sneer at the idea of a moderate minister ever being able to conduct others to the kingdom of heaven, or ever getting there himself. It so happens, however, that moderatism in ecclesiastics is frequently coupled with moderatism in theology, though we cannot give a very satisfactory reason for the connexion. At first sight there is nothing very absurd in believing that the man who is willing to let ecclesiastical law receive the sanction of the state, may have on his soul the seal of the Spirit of God, and facts prove that, in some instances at least, this is the case. On the other hand, it must be admitted that some who arranged themselves on the side of the evangelicals during the famous ten years of conflict between the systems, are very moderate in their theological and religious creed. It must also be stated that a few, at least, of real theological moderates, joined the side of the ecclesiastical evangelicals, and even forsook the Established Church because the veto was ineffective—though that very veto, if it had been in force, would have stood between them and their livings. Here, then, we reach the fact, that an ecclesiastical moderate is not necessarily a theological moderate; and, on the other hand, an ecclesiastical evangelical may be a theological moderate. Let no one, then, conclude, because a clergyman took a certain side of ecclesiastics, he is necessarily unsound in his theology, or that because a man contends and makes sacrifices for ecclesiastical supremacy, he therefore is sound in the faith as it was delivered to the saints. We may admit, however, that moderatism in ecclesiastics is very frequently, and not very unnaturally, associated with a very dry and bald system of theology. The man that willingly surrenders the form and fashion of his ecclesiastical faith to an ambiguous parliament is in some danger of losing sight of the supremacy of Christ in the gospel, as well as his supremacy as head over all things for the church. On many a minister, whose ecclesiastical faith is moulded by act of par-

liament, there seems to have fallen dread delusions. There is as little of Christ in their doctrines as in their ecclesiastics, and less of him in their life than in either. They look on Christ as a great martyr and a great sufferer, and the best of beings, but they proclaim not the vicarious nature of his sufferings nor the power of his grace, and hence any name is more apt for them than that of Christian. Notwithstanding this tendency of ecclesiastical moderatism to seek alliance with theological moderatism, the union is not universal nor even general. Not a few of the greatest sticklers for the supremacy of civil law in ecclesiastics, are the most determined preachers of Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let none, then, prejudge a clergyman's faith by his ecclesiastics, but let his doctrines be fairly tried, irrespective of his ecclesiastical creed. We have thought the above remarks necessary, to preface what we have to say of the subject of our sketch, who has long been known as a decided and a consistent moderate in matters ecclesiastical. In the Presbytery of Greenock, he and one other member long fought the battle of moderatism, and whatever may be said against his advocacy, it has at least the merit of being consistent. Let none suppose that the above remarks are meant to be a defence of moderatism—they are designed merely to prevent rash condemnation, and inconsecutive and unfair conclusions, and to lead to candour.

Last Sabbath he preached on Rev. xxi. 22, "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." The sermon occupied forty minutes. It was logical in its order, neat in its illustration, and, generally, conclusive in its inferences. The preacher showed that temples, whether idolatrous, Jewish, or Christian, would be out of place in the heavenly world, and inferred that if religion is to be carried on in heaven without a ceremonial, those who expect to dwell there should now learn to distinguish between the form and the power, the circumstantial and the spirit of religion. He employs language neat and chaste, and keeps prominently in the view of his hearers the fact or principle he proves or discusses. He has an excellent voice, but does it very scanty justice. In reading the Scriptures its modulation is at fault. Occasionally the less important words are made

emphatic, when the more important are passed rapidly over. In preaching this defect does not appear to the same extent, though there is still more than enough of it. Many of the sentences are well delivered, and others of them, though they have been carefully prepared, are marred by the utterance. The discourse contained nothing in its general views contrary to the usual form of sound and evangelical words. A mind more poetical would, no doubt, have produced a more brilliant discourse. On such a text it would be no difficult matter to dazzle with creations of the sublime—to soar in those regions where there is no temple, but where the songs of the inhabitants are reverberated by the everlasting hills, and where the dwellers “shall mount on wings like eagles,” and survey the lovely things of creation and redemption with a sweep of intellect and depth of meaning to which the dwellers on earth are strangers. But our preacher never attempted those soarings of fancy which invest such a subject with a real or adventitious interest. He spoke in sober language of the certain realities of a hastening state, and said much, which, if it did not fire the fancy of his hearers, was well calculated to better their hearts and strengthen their faith.

In one or two of the preacher's conclusions we were not sure of their legitimacy. We understood him to say that the continuance of anything proved its imperfection. This is by no means a universal principle. The preacher must have meant that continuance of means appointed to answer a definite end would prove the end not reached. With this limitation the principle is correct and important. We have no data to enable us to judge particularly of the evangelism of the preacher's views. He has published little or nothing, and such of his discourses as we have heard contained nothing opposed to the most evangelical doctrine. On the occasion in question “the Lamb” was in the text, and occasionally in the discourse, though it would have been possible without any departure from the most textual division and illustration to have given Him a more prominent place in the discourse. It is certainly heaven to see God, but apostles and prophets anticipated seeing Christ. Job knew Christ as the living Redeemer, and Paul desired to depart and to be with Christ. Absent from the body and

present with the Lord was his brief description of the heavenly state. The armies in heaven are represented as following the Lamb, and the hosts of heaven are exhibited as worshipping Him who was slain. We know the difficulties that present themselves on this subject. A material body is considered incompatible with the spirituality of heaven, but the fact is we know nothing of the line that separates the material from the spiritual. On these questions we must rely on testimony—the testimony of Jesus, and try our philosophy on other subjects. It would be exceedingly unfair, however, to infer from the mode in which our preacher discussed his text that Christ and him crucified, and Christ and him glorified are not the themes of his discourses. He said nothing on his text but what was fairly deducible from it, and probably he may have another sermon on the last clause of his text, “The Lord God and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

Mr Menzies is of the middle size, and stoutly built. His countenance is expressive, and his lofty brow begins to be covered with the snows of years. He was ordained in 1835, and officiated in Greenock till after the disruption, when he was removed to his present sphere of labour in Maybole, near Ayr. As already said, he has always been a staunch and consistent moderate in ecclesiastical matters, so that he is clear, at least, of the sin of ecclesiastical vacillation. In presbyteries and synods he has long taken a prominent place, though, when in Greenock, few of the members of presbytery sympathised with his views. In private life he is well reported of for affectionate and faithful friendship, and open and unaffected candour. His people at Greenock parted with him with great reluctance, and gave him a splendid testimonial, probably the most costly ever given to any Scottish clergyman, and the town council had previously increased his stipend. Already he has embalmed himself in the affections of his present charge. He is a native of Dunkeld, Perthshire, and was educated in St Andrew's University, of which he is a graduate. He is apparently about fifty years of age.

April 21, 1849.

REV. A. BEITH,

STIRLING.

THAN Stirling there is scarcely a spot in Scotland encircled with so many and so varied associations. The intelligent visitor feels that he stands on sacred ground—ground consecrated with the blood of heroes and martyrs, political and religious. Around him are conjured up the stirring spirits of a dozen centuries, who, during their brief existence, excited the fear or the love of their savage or enlightened contemporaries. Tradition supplies the facts and fables of a thousand years. It recalls a time when might was right, and when physical force held the ascendancy—when religious and political disputes were settled by the broad-sword, and when the brawny arm of a Wallace decided the fate of battles and the fate of Scotland under the rocky walls of Stirling's ancient fortress. As the visitor walks about the environs of that refuge of Scottish kings, and surveys the wide outspread around, what associations haunt his memory and fancy! The everlasting rocks lift their heads in mockery of all human glory. The ambitious and the great made the place the theatre of their tragedies—human pride and human passion sported their brief hour. The actors successively disappeared and mouldered into dust, while the stage remained. The fields, once glittering with spears, now wave with corn, while the spearmen sleep quietly beneath. Christianity, with its softening and elevating influences, has visited the place, and at once changed the aspect of society and of the country. The ancient burgh, which in feudal times bristled with the instruments of war, now reposes quietly unwatched by even a policeman. In the castle a few soldiers still nestle,

and the sound of the battle-drum is heard, but not for purposes of war. The design is to keep up the memory of days and of deeds, many of which made the world little wiser or better. The soldier appears in martial array, but he encounters no enemies, and dreads no alarm. The voice of the gospel of peace has hushed the battle-cry, and rendered the descendants of a people, once famous in war, remarkable for their assiduity in cultivating the arts of peace. The skill of the cunning artificer is now employed in designing and perfecting the implements of husbandry, and the instrument of war is there being literally beat into ploughshares and pruning hooks. Where there lived a people that crouched to a licentious and superstitious priesthood, their now dwell a people distinguished for their attachment to the simple rituals of a Protestant Christianity; and where Dominicans and Black Friars corrupted the population, the minister of Christ proclaims those doctrines and duties which at once elevate society and prepare for a dwelling in the everlasting habitations of the land where change is unknown. Chief among the clergymen of this ancient town is he whose name heads these remarks.

Last Sabbath forenoon, at twenty minutes to twelve, he announced, as subject of lecture, the first four verses of Rom. viii. The verses read, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation," &c. The preacher proceeded by saying that the verses had an obvious and direct reference to all the preceding epistle. They include the conclusion of all the apostle's previous demonstration. He had in previous chapters (considered in former lectures) proved Jew and Gentile to be alike under sin—that there was no hope from deeds of law—that salvation was gratuitous through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and by faith in his name, and the consequent necessity of giving up all hope in our own works. He had showed, too, that union with Christ, implying separation from our natural connexion with the law, was the only way of salvation. The use of the law, in the great system of evangelical truth, he had shown to be to condemn, and to humble, and even those who are believers must hear it, that they may learn more and more the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The verses lead us to consider the three following things:—1st, The

description of those saved; 2d, The ground on which it rests; and, 3d, The explanation and illustration of this. In the discussion of those saved, we consider, 1st, Their station and rank; 2d, Their character; and, 3d, Their privileges. The sermon was over at a quarter to one, having occupied an hour and five minutes. After the concluding services, the congregation was dismissed a few minutes before one o'clock.

The lecture was evidently one of a course on the epistle to the Romans. It is probably one of its excellencies, that in order to fully appreciate it, a knowledge of the preceding lectures is indispensable. The first ten or eleven chapters of that book are acknowledged to be a continuous train of argumentation of great strength and completeness. None but a mind of great argumentative force could have sustained the consecutive thought, and none but a mind of similar calibre can satisfactorily discuss it. The great majority of the expounders of that book break up and destroy the apostle's reasoning. They can find in the book important facts and principles, but they are unable to grapple with it as a complete whole. On the present occasion the expounder proved himself equal to the task. The passage discussed he ably showed to be inferential. The doctrines it contained he not only proved to be important, but the resistless deductions from a series of facts themselves indisputable. The apostle starts with axioms, if not self-evident, amply verified by experience, and from these he reasons till he reach the triumphant conclusion, that to those in Christ there is now no condemnation. It deserves special notice that the mind that thus successfully grappled with Paul's great argument, instead of being overpowered with it, clearly and philosophically reduced his sublime inference to logical arrangement. In the four verses the preacher found the description of the believer—the ground on which it rests, and an explanation and illustration of the important inference. And not only did he admirably group the great facts and principles of Paul's finding, but with equal skill did he classify the particulars of each separate head. In the statement, "those who are in Christ Jesus," he found the rank and station of believers. In their *walk* he found their character; and in their deliverance

from condemnation he found their privilege—a privilege that combines in one all the blessings they enjoy. Though a thousand and one have printed and published on these verses, we doubt whether for neatness, completeness, and comprehensiveness, any one of them has been so fortunate in his arrangement. Nor was this division the result of chance—it could have been reached only by a mind of great clearness and comprehensiveness, and by a mind deeply imbued with the spirit of the epistle. The illustrations of these several divisions and subdivisions were of a thoroughly popular and practical character. Though they bore with admirable effect on the several ideas, they formed in some respects a contrast with the mapping of the outline. That outline, as we have seen, was neat and laconic—the illustrations were diffuse and verbose. The outline was that of a Jay or James—the illustrations were those of Chalmers or Melville. We mean not that the words or sentiments were theirs—we speak of their method and manner. The preacher reiterated his thoughts, lest on some minds their simple statement might not take effect. Chalmers thought a sermon well bestowed if even one fact or principle was so palpably and so vividly stated, that every mind must apprehend it, and our preacher to a less extent illustrated profusely his several particulars.

We were particularly struck with the fact, that in the earlier part of the service the preacher stated his views so as to make them appear hyper-Calvinistic, while towards the close they appeared to us considerably mitigated. In his prayer and in the commencement of his discourse the sovereignty of God and the resistlessness of grace were vindicated, while, towards the close, man's responsibility, and the freedom of his choice in the matter of salvation, were equally forcibly defended. We consider the two things perfectly consistent. He alone can consistently preach man's responsibility who vindicates God's sovereignty; but it appeared to us that the seeming difference, though essential unity of view, was attributable to another cause. At first the preacher was collected and philosophical almost to coldness; but as he proceeded the fire burned, till, as he reached the close of the discourse, the glory and freeness of redemption appeared so conspicuous, that he felt urged on

to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God. He saw no barrier between men and the boundless love of God but their own wilfulness and wickedness. And here we have a broad line of demarcation between the mere drivelling doctrinalist and the man that trembles at God's word. The former can classify the decrees of God with as much coolness as he could solve a problem of Euclid—the latter, while he occasionally dares to reverently inquire into them, prefers to see their counterpart in the palpable facts which are being evolved before his eye. Among the latter class, and not among the former, our preacher has a place. At times he attempts to scale the lofty eminence, and look into the book of the eternal decrees; but his eye passes from the book to the heart, and to the hand of God, and the hard things in the decree melt into the light of heaven. The cold theorist can look on an audience as a piece of delicately adjusted machinery moved by his resistless will; but the man who looks into the heart of Jehovah sees each within the circle of an invitation that ought to lead him to salvation and to heaven.

But while there is very much in the preacher's views to interest and to edify, there can be no question that the secret of his success is his hearty earnestness. He not only lifts up the warning voice, but "he cries aloud, and spares not." His eye affects his heart, and his heart directs his eye. He preaches like one who feels the urgency of the business of eternity. After he calmly maps his discourse, and arranges his plan, he speedily shows that his object is other than merely the filling up of a canonical hour. His whole frame trembles under the burden of the message he feels himself called to deliver. He appears as if ever apprehensive of the woe that hovers over the man that preaches not the gospel with an energy and earnestness worthy of the cause. Animated as are his gestures, his burdened spirit refuses to wait the motions of the body. The action, always animated, is often behind the thought. The spirit is onward, while the body is left behind. This causes an occasional incongruity between the sentiment and the gesture. The action is animated almost to excess, but it is unable to keep up with the impetuosity of the spirit.

In the spring of 1821 he was elected minister of the Chapel of Ease, Oban, Argyleshire, being then only entering his 23d year. His whole course at college had been completed in Glasgow, and he was one of Dr M'Gill's earliest students. In Oban he preached both in the Gaelic and English languages. In the end of 1824 he was elected to the Hope Street Gaelic Chapel, Glasgow, and was the first minister settled there. During the time he was in Glasgow he was connected with the good men of that day in the management of public religious societies. In the end of 1826 he was presented by the Marquis of Breadalbane, to the parish of Kilbrandon, Argyleshire, and in 1830 he was presented, by the present Lord Glenelg, then Mr Charles Grant, to the parish of Glenelg, Invernessshire; and lastly, in 1839, by the Town Council of Stirling, to the kirk or parochial charge of Stirling. Not one of these changes did he seek, and he complied with them not on personal but on public grounds, having agreed to them principally on the advice of those whom he considered more competent to judge of the course of duty in each case. He has refused more calls than he has accepted.

Having passed the principal part of his time in the country, he was for many years away from the vortex of polemical strife, and therefore did not mingle in any way in the voluntary controversy. In the subsequent struggle of the Established Church Courts with the Civil Courts, he had a fair share of the labour, and at the disruption he abandoned his position in the Establishment, and lost a church which has been built there mainly by his own instrumentality, and principally at the cost of friends who adhered to him on the secession. In 1841 he was one of the seven ministers, Dr Gordon being at their head, who were sent to Strathbogie to preach in defiance of the interdict of the Court of Session. In 1847 he was examined before the Site Committee of the House of Commons, and his evidence there brings out several important matters connected with his ecclesiastical life, and questions of importance with which he was connected.

Mr Beith is known favourably as a popular writer. In 1823 he published, in Gaelic, a small volume on the Baptist Controversy—defending infant baptism and sprink-

ling as the mode of administration. In 1824 he published, also in Gaelic, a small Catechism on Baptism, for the Use of Parents, and on something of the same kind, afterwards in English. In 1837 he wrote an account of the Revivals of Religion in Skye, which was published by the Glasgow Tract Society. In 1838 he published "Sorrowing, yet Rejoicing," being the narrative of recent bereavements in his family. This has reached the eighth edition, and is a work which has soothed many a sorrowful spirit, and which is destined to soothe many more. In 1846 he published "The Two Witnesses Traced in History;" a small work on the first fourteen verses of the 11th chapter of Revelation. And in 1849 "Letters to the Author of the Eighth Vial," being a following up of the subject of the preceding work. One or two fugitive pamphlets, and occasional articles for periodicals, comprise the remaining fruit of his pen.

His present congregation is large and influential. The building which is really a comfortable one, though not very attractive in its outward appearance, seats above a thousand persons, and is generally well filled. His people give him probably as large a salary as any Free Church minister out of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and also subscribe liberally to the sustentation fund. The Clerical Almanack states last year's collections by the congregation at above £800.

JUNE 16, 1849.

REV. A. M'DOUGALL,

ARGYLL CHURCH, GLASGOW.

THOUGH the changed state of society has done much to break up the different clans of our Highland population, the natives still retain a strong individuality. The physical and mental attributes of the sons of the mountain are as marked as are those of the sons of Abraham. Whose form is so robust—whose step is so elastic—whose features are so expressive, as the children of the hills? Who has a will and a purpose like those schooled where the torrents roar so fiercely, and the mountain frowns so grimly? Where are domestic ties so strong, and friendships endearments so ardent, as in the lands of the mountains? Better still, where has piety, earnest and ardent, found a more welcome home than in the breast that knows no other fear, and in the family whose solitary home stands far away from the secularities and imbecilities of the crowded city? Long has religion found a congenial dwelling among the fastnesses of our country. What tales have we not heard of the piety, as well as of the patriotism, of the West Highlanders, even in days when religion in the lowlands was little more than a mere name? How often did they that feared the Lord meet in dens and caves of the earth, while the voice of praise and prayer mingled with the mountain torrent, and with the howlings of the midnight wind? Those not versant with the events of former days, may easily satisfy themselves of the marked character of the religion of the sons of these remarkable people. The ardour of their natural temperament is seen in their devotion—they read, they sing, they pray, as no other people. The Psalm may not be always “sung in time,” but it is sung with earnestness—the syllables may not be accented to

the taste of lexicographers—the prayer may not be in accordance with the rules of the logician, but the individuality, which characterises all, compensates every other loss. In our city we have several congregations made up chiefly of immigrants from the neighbouring Highlands, and to one of these the subject of our sketch successfully ministers. Our space excludes an outline of his last Sabbath's work. Probably no preacher owes more than the subject of our sketch to an earnest delivery. He possesses in a high degree what is called a presence, and, when preaching, his gestures are exceedingly animated, and his voice raised to its highest, and often to its loudest pitch. He is one of the instances in which the manner is probably as effective as the matter. Indeed he is one of the best possible illustrations of the success of an earnest delivery. A great authority said that the best way to make an audience serious, is for the preacher to prove that he is himself in earnest in his sacred cause. The physical effort put forth in this case is immense, and, we should think, must, in a short time, tell prejudicially on the constitution of the preacher. His voice is strong and clear, and is possessed of much compass. It might, however, be more perfectly under command. We need not say that a voice like his, sustained at its highest key, is under imperfect control. Whether the subject is didactic or expository, pathetic or historical, the pitch of voice is the same. As a preacher, Mr M'Dougall is both popular and useful. He has a large congregation, which includes a number of our most enterprising citizens. The congregation raises several hundred pounds annually for congregational and general purposes. The building is large and neat—a model for convenience and comfort. As a ruler, Mr M'Dougall conducts himself with much propriety and firmness, and has hitherto enjoyed the hearty and unanimous co-operation of those who bear office in the church. Indeed, but for that unanimity, a church so young could not have got over its initiatory difficulties, and reached such a status in a period so brief. As a student, the subject of our sketch is diligent, industrious, and persevering. He is well versed in theological learning, and his reading is stored up by a retentive memory. In private life he is open, communicative and amiable, and enjoys a wide circle of attached friends.

The subject of our sketch is a native of Tarbert, Kintyre, Argyleshire. He was licensed as a preacher of the Established Church, at Edinburgh, in 1839, where he had completed his curriculum under Dr Chalmers. He was ordained at Glasgow in 1843, and in the interim, between the time of license and ordination, he was Governor of the Edinburgh Orphan Hospital. His first place of worship in Glasgow was Kirkfield Church, Gorbals. The congregation, which was formed by an offbreak from another congregation in town, amounted to about 300, and continued to worship there till 1847, when they removed to the present church in Oswald street, called Argyll Church, in honour of the martyr of that name. The congregation has now increased to 900, about 500 of whom are communicants. Like not a few, he owes his success in life solely to the blessing of God on his own industry. His father died when he was young, and left him to his shifts. By perseverance and industry, under a gracious Providence, he succeeded well, and his efforts in his native place for promoting the cause of education and religion, have not yet been forgotten by the people. About two years after Mr M'Dougall was settled in Glasgow, he received two calls contemporaneously from the congregations in Kenmore and Lochearnhead, but his attachment to his own congregation induced him to reject both, and remain where his success proves him so obviously in his proper place. He made every effort, along with his managers, to leave as little debt on his church as possible. The congregation is fluctuating, consisting, to a great extent, of persons who are in Glasgow only temporarily, and who, consequently, take not that interest in pecuniary matters which residents do; and lays greater responsibility on those who are settled in Glasgow. This, of course, should induce those who take an interest in the floating Highland population to aid a church which has done so much to provide them with proper means of grace during their stay in our city.

MAY 19, 1849.



service has been excellently and profitably discussed, and cannot fail to be generally useful. The writer's notions of lecturing and preaching seem quite correct, and both exceedingly just; and, as such, are adapted to profit the parties immediately concerned, and also all those of whom they may severally be considered the types. How far the critic is capable of exemplifying his own precepts I know not, but sure I am, had he lived in another age, he would have occupied a respectable place in the school of Quintillian or Longinus. He is largely endowed with the spirit of just criticism, and his gifts have not been neglected. I have observed that he has no stock either of stereotyped phrases or images; he takes each case *per se*, and deals with it according to its qualities and circumstances, and hence he shows no sign of exhaustion. If by various hands, and there seems such a hint, if I remember right, in one place, then the mystery is solved, and the rare merit must not be ascribed to an individual. Lastly, but not least, the Sketches seem distinguished by a goodly measure of integrity, which the men of Glasgow will not fail to appreciate. I have observed, with satisfaction, that the greatest and the least are treated with proper freedom. Such are the general impressions made upon my mind by the series; I confidently predict for them great popularity both in Scotland and England."

FROM "KITTO'S JOURNAL OF SACRED LITERATURE."

"The relation of the pulpit to our modern intellectual and social state—the causes of its wanting influence, confessed by impartial parties on all hands—the measures of influence exerted by the press, especially, among those causes: whether, in existing circumstances, its influence is capable of being restored, and if so, by what means, are questions of great and immediate importance; questions which publications like the present are adapted to suggest, and which we should have liked to have taken up in connection with the volume before us, as we feel that at the present hour they much demand to be revolved and discussed. But of this for the present neither our time or our space admit. On one main point, however, and in reference to a recent practical discussion of one branch of the subject, we agree with a writer in one of our best popular periodicals, that in order to its greater efficiency there is one thing which the Christian ministry wants in our time fully as much as increased zeal, adaptation: general adaptation to the prevailing intellectual, moral and social character of the times, and adaptation in individual instances to local circumstances and exigencies. In inquiries such as we are here indicating, a book like that before us is of considerable value, as it discusses the intellectual, moral, and other qualifications of a great number of clergymen of different communions; at the same time that an epitome of their ordinary ministrations on some

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particular day is usually presented to the reader. The sketches are generally executed with ability; and though it is only of a few that we can speak from personal acquaintance with the subjects of them, respecting these few we bear our willing testimony that they are characterised by prevailing fidelity as well as graphic power. Then the sketches are executed in a kindly spirit, excellencies being dwelt on rather than defects."

FROM THE "NORTH BRITISH DAILY MAIL."

"This goodly and well got-up volume, contains no less than fifty-two sketches, biographical, theological, and critical, of clergymen of all denominations, principally belonging to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The design of the publication is to furnish data for a correct estimate being formed of the present state of the Scottish pulpit; and it has been worked out with no ordinary amount of skill, judgment, and enthusiasm. The sketches are all ably written; the criticisms impartial, and in general discriminating and just; and the notices of the early studies and history of the different ministers, so far as we are aware, correct. Though apparently, by various hands, the sketches possess a unity of tone and a harmony of feeling, which evinces the superintendence of one guiding mind. Abstracts of the sermons or lectures delivered by them, on the occasion when each was taken, are given in a style which, while it imparts a sufficient notion of the matter and characteristics of the discourse, is not too long or wearisome in the perusal."

FROM THE "ECLECTIC REVIEW."

"We took up this volume with some fear that it was another of this trashy kind, but we have been most agreeably disappointed. The writers—for it is the work of more than one author---have "souls above buttons," and while they do not omit the personal appearance of the subjects of their sketches, they keep it in its right place, and devote their attention to the mental peculiarities. In all there is an attempt---and usually a very successful one---at a fair discriminating estimate of character. The general plan of each sketch, is to give a brief picture of the actual ministration of each clergyman selected, on a certain Sabbath-day, and then to furnish an estimate of the man, and a condensed biography. The former part of each sketch embraces of course, minute details of the whole service, even down to the number of verses that were sung, and the number of minutes spent in prayer, as well as an abstract of the sermon; the latter part is usually done with care, candour, and acuteness."

FROM THE "SCOTTISH GUARDIAN."

"This is a clever, readable, popular kind of book, which we doubt not will have a considerable run. We let you to wit then, ye gifted

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ministers, that "there's a chiel amang ye taking notes." We don't think you have much cause of fear. The critic is very eulogistic. If the author shows talent in detecting and lauding clerical qualifications which persons of dimmer optics had not been able to discover, he shows greater talent when he has an unquestionably good subject. In these cases the sketches are graphic and accurate, and the criticisms just and good, and will, we are convinced, be read with pleasure."

FROM THE "EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE."

"We are not strongly tending to the admiration of living biography; it is a delicate and difficult, not to say impossible task to do it justice. Nevertheless we must say that this volume, chiefly relating to the living, has overcome some of our scruples. It is executed with unwonted tact and skill, and must by impartial judges, be pronounced to be a very successful production of its kind. As we are well acquainted with some of the originals here sketched, we must pronounce them to be more than general likenesses. We think, too, that the spirit which pervades the volume is equally removed from fulsome adulation and unfair criticism, and that the friends of the men who here find a niche, must regard the moral statuary as, upon the whole, remarkable for its truthfulness and adherence to nature. Such a volume is highly creditable to the pen from which it emanated, and can tend only to good upon the public mind."

FROM THE "CHURCH OF ENGLAND JOURNAL"

"These Sketches are written with great ability and sound judgment; and we recommend them to the attention of all those, whether in England or any other part of the British dominions, who may be desirous of becoming acquainted with the personal history, and with the peculiar characteristics of pulpit oratory, of the most eminent Scottish preachers."

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From nature up to nature's God.

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FROM THE "GREENOCK ADVERTISER."

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